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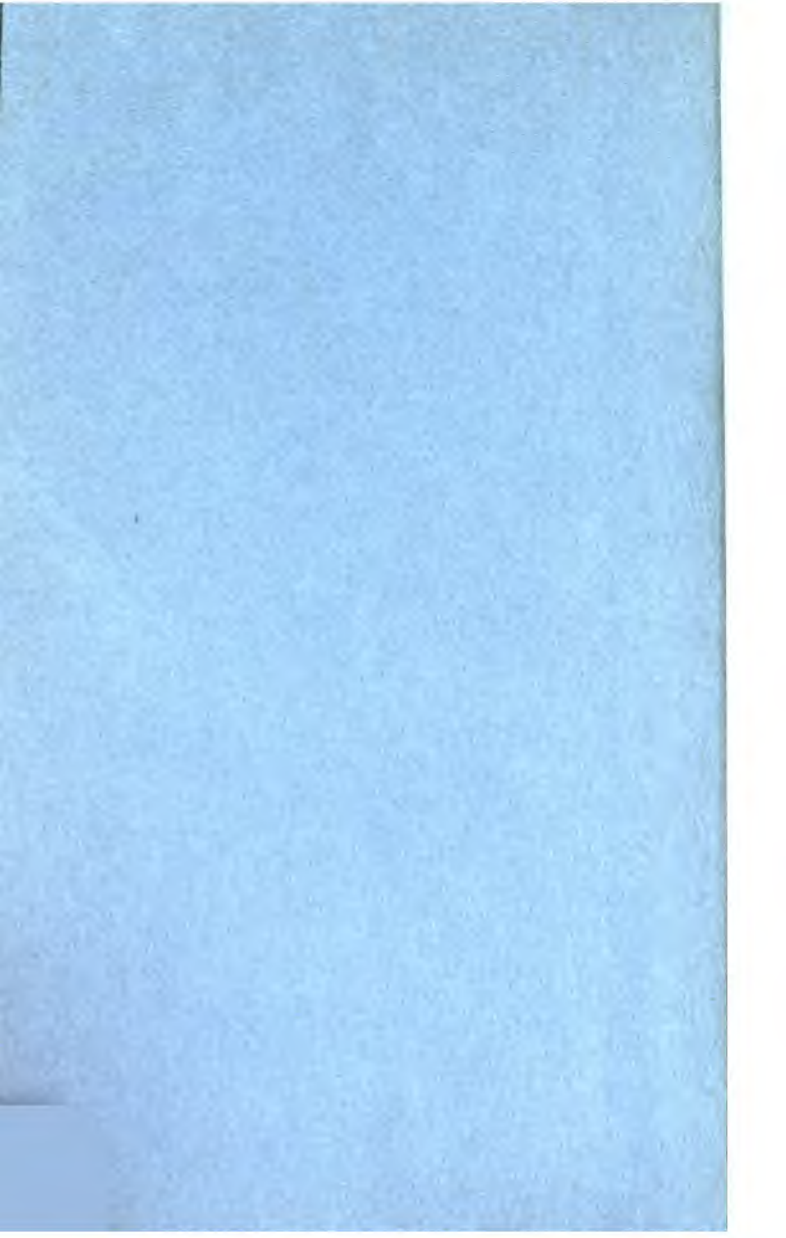
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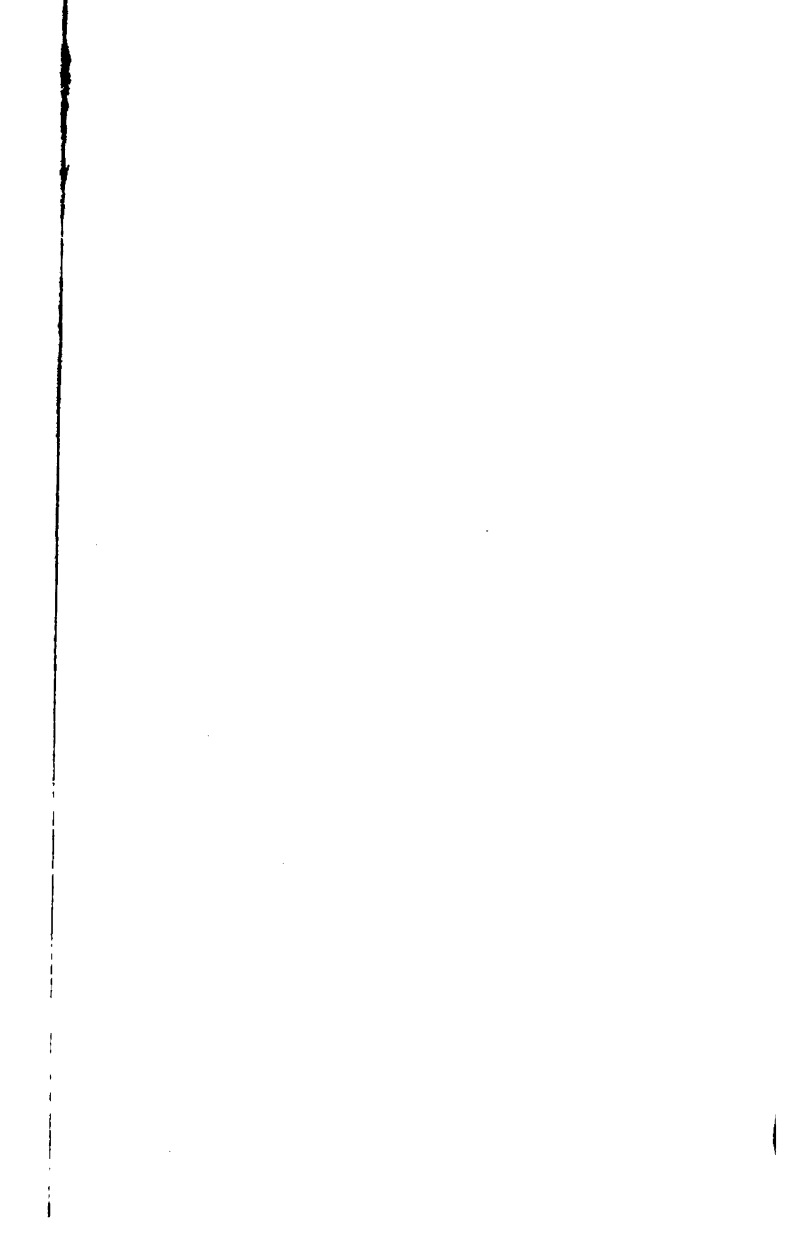
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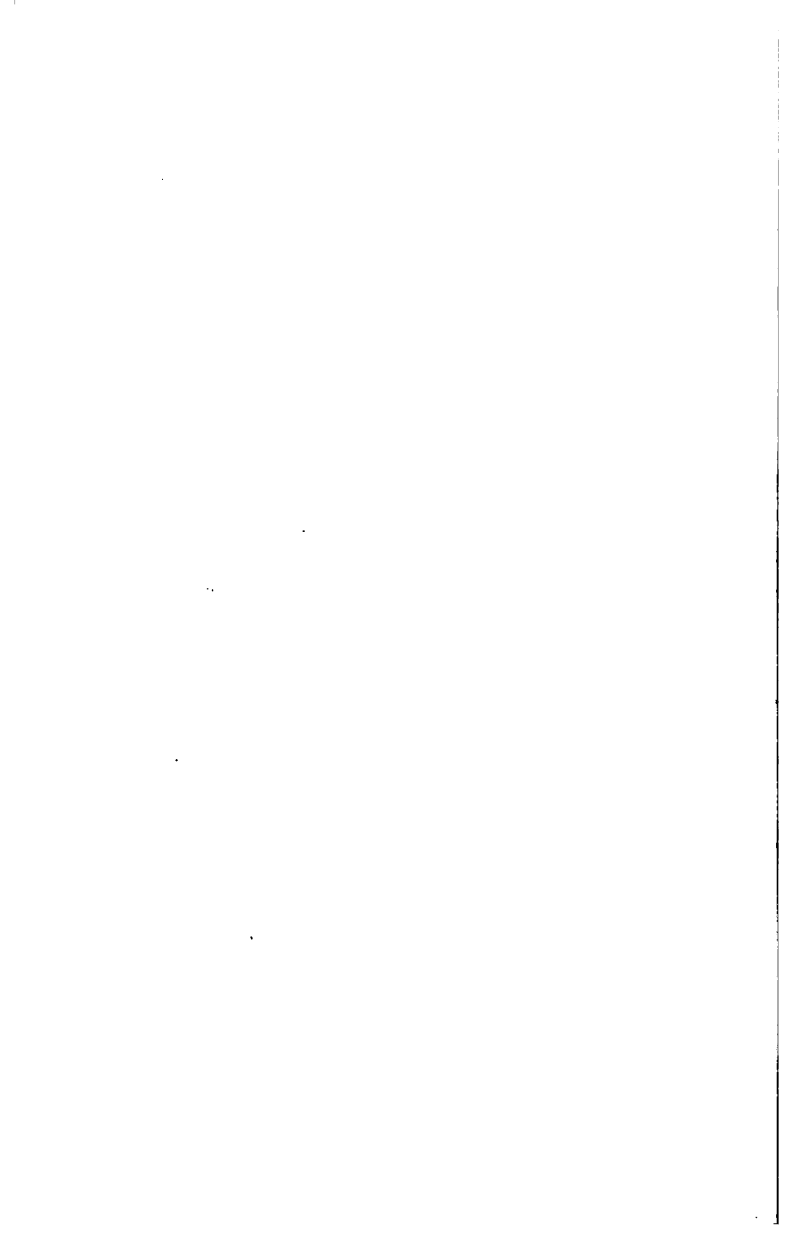
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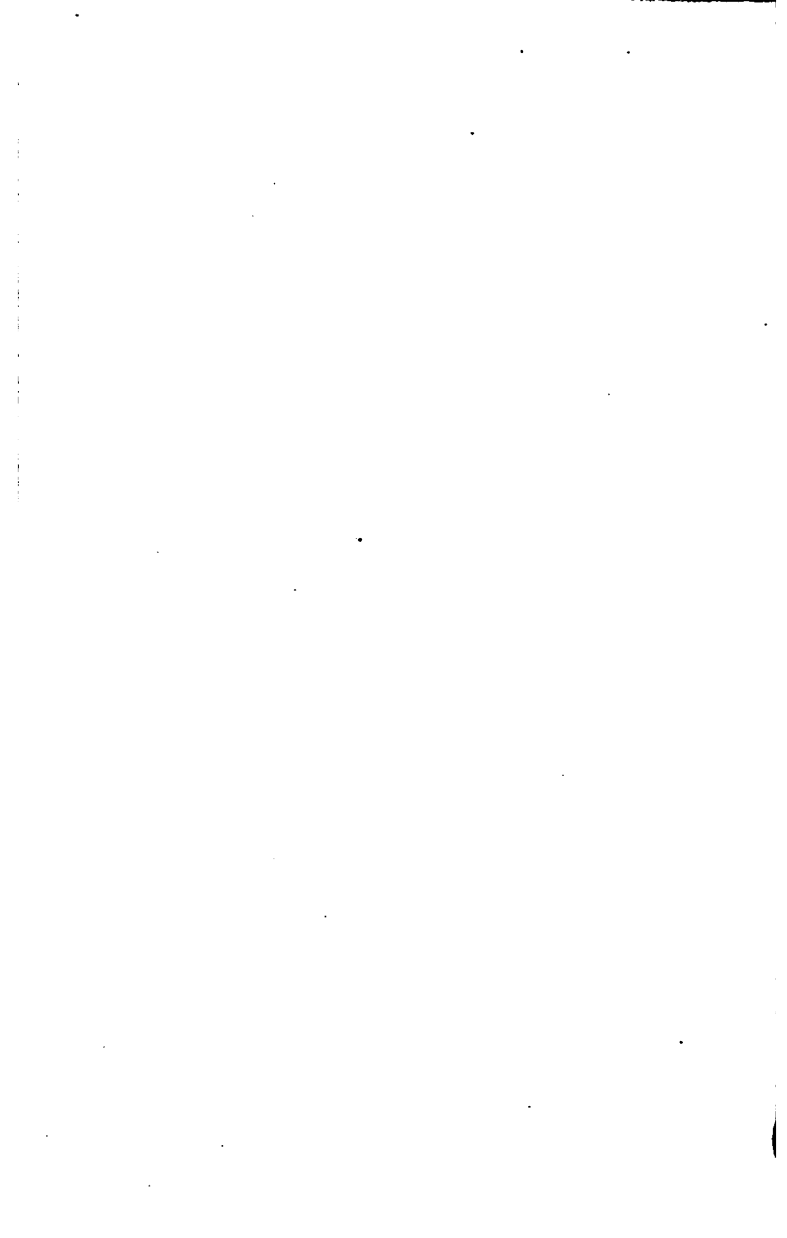




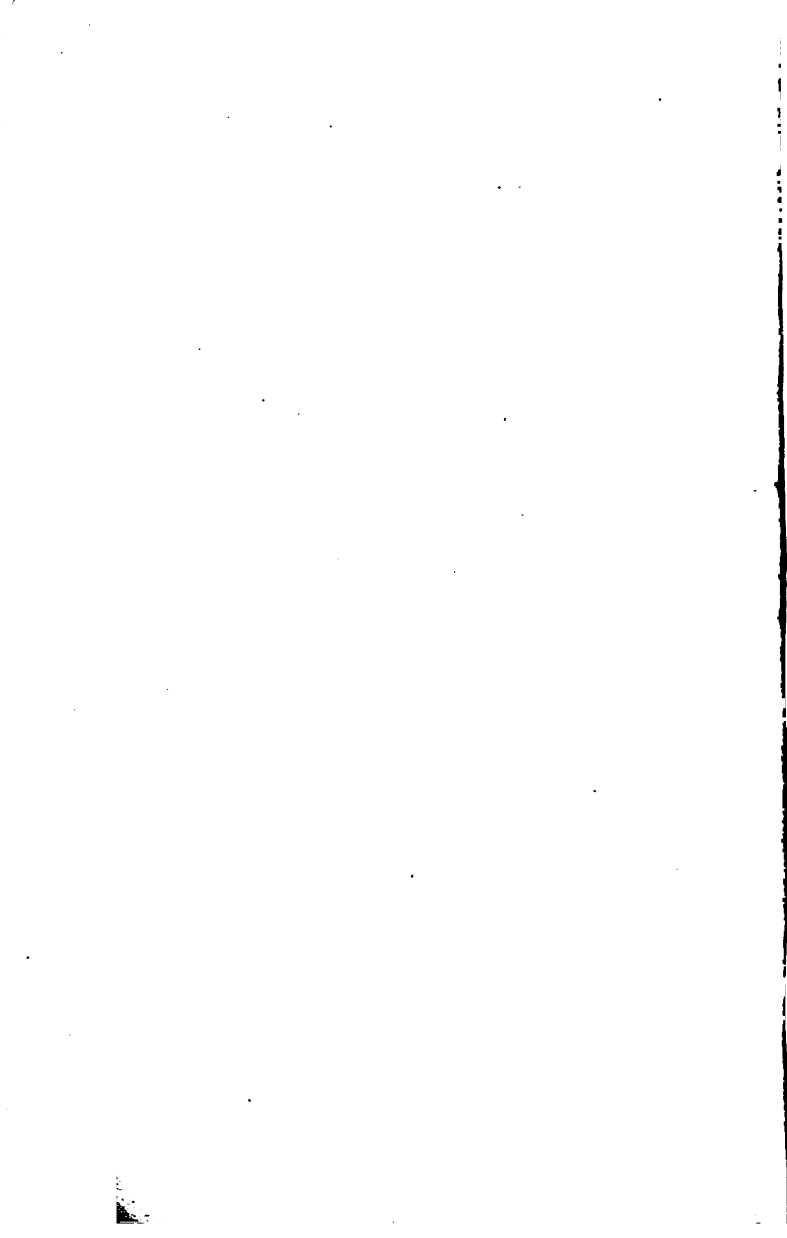


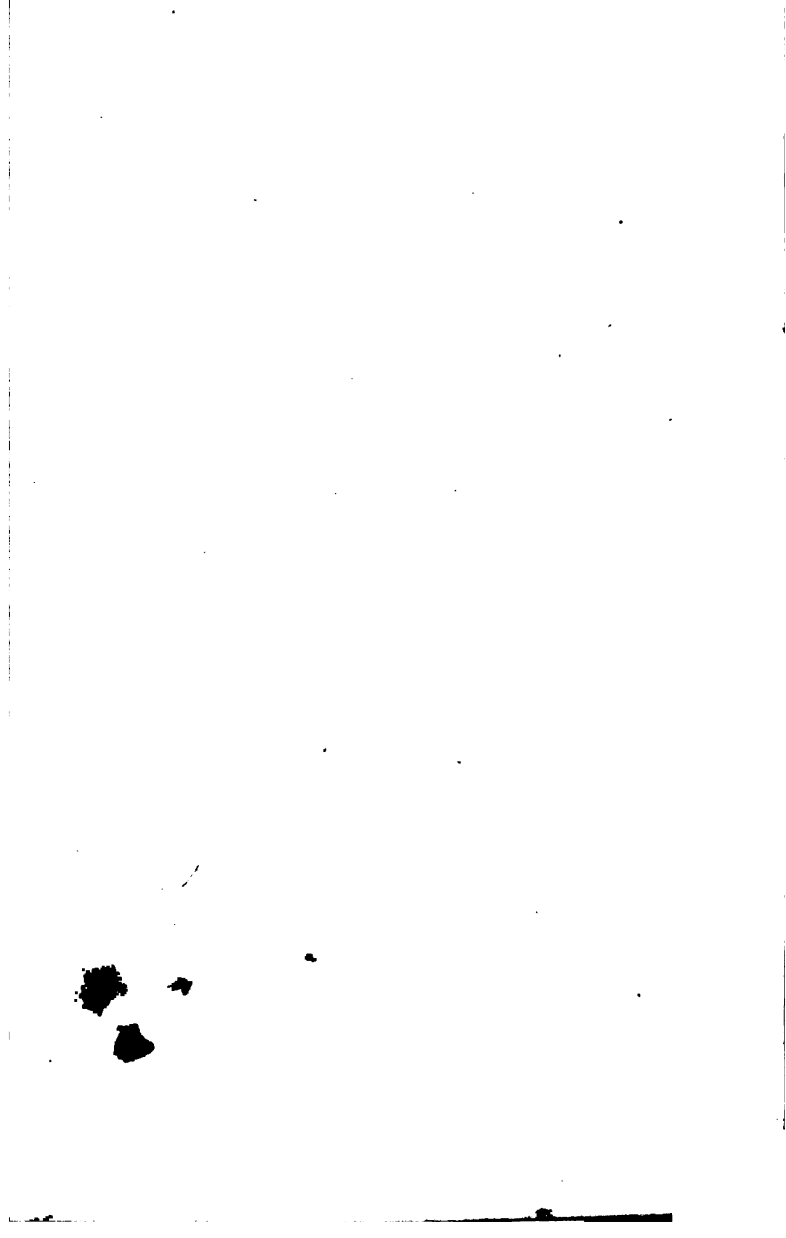














Painted by J. C. Burpee

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN.

THE SELF EDUCATED MAN

L I F E  
OF  
DOCTOR FRANKLIN.

BY  
JOHN N. NORTON, A. M.,  
RECTOR OF ASCENSION CHURCH, FRANKFORT, KENTUCKY; AUTHOR OF  
"FULL PROOF OF MINISTRY," "SHORT SERMONS," "LIFE  
OF WASHINGTON," "LIVES OF BISHOPS," ETC.

"Every penny stamp is a monument to Franklin, earned, if not established by himself, as the fruit of his early labors and his signal success in the organization of an infant post-office."

ROBERT C. WINTHROP.

"He professes himself to be a Protestant of the Church of England, and holds in the highest veneration the doctrines of JESUS CHRIST."

FRANKLIN'S *Preface to Abridgment of Prayer-Book.*

---

FRANKFORT, KY.:  
S. I. M. MAJOR & CO.  
1861.

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By JOHN N. NORTON,  
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RENNIE, SHEA & LINDSAY,  
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TO

ALEXANDER DALLAS BACHE, LL.D.,  
SUPERINTENDENT OF THE UNITED STATES COAST SURVEY.

---

It is your happy lot to be a lineal descendant of the illustrious Franklin. I dedicate this his brief portraiture to you, because it is even your happier lot to reproduce his lineaments in characteristic services to our country and race.

Franklin was ever the fittest man in the fittest place; *secundis dubiisque rectus*.

The calm philosopher of a colony whose chief maxim was Peace, he was captain, colonel, and generalissimo, when peace had to be fought for. Agent of the colonies to preserve existing relations with the mother-land, he became ambassador, with more than "Plenipotentiary" powers, to secure Independence, when those relations were no longer tolerable. The greatest philosopher and the greatest statesman of his age, having filled the world with his fame, he yet gave even his octogenarian years to the Presidency of Pennsylvania, and at the same time to the convention which framed the Constitution of the United States. And as one of the founders of their empire, he labored first and last in the cause of education, morals, and religion, as the foundation of its durability.

You, too, have borne arms; you, too, have laid broad foundations in education, morals, and religion; you, too, beyond any other than your great ancestor, have illustrated American science.

That the work of both ancestor and descendant may contribute largely to the welfare of this people, and that all things may be so ordered and settled upon the best and surest foundations, that peace and happiness, truth and justice, religion and piety may be established among us for all generations, is the humble, earnest prayer of

THE AUTHOR.

M364265

"Franklin appreciated the devout and transcendent labors of such men as Jonathan Edwards, in laying the foundations, and could empty his pockets at the heart-stirring appeals of Whitefield. His friendships, in England and America, were with bishops and divines. The Bishop of St. Asaph, of Sodor and Man, no less than the Methodist Whitefield, were his friends; and he could cast an eye backward with affection and reverence from the glittering *salons* of Paris to the dark shades of Puritan ancestors. There was a sound vein of piety in his composition, which bore its fruits; nor had French levity, or companionship with the encyclopædists, blunted his religious education. His warning hand, raised to Paine on the eve of his infidel publication, deserves to be remembered."—*Duyckinck's Cyclopædia*.

"One of the most grateful things in my experience among the middle classes in England, France, and Germany, is, that I have been there recognized as the countryman of Franklin, and by virtue of this, have been often received as a friend."—*Goodrich's Recollections of a Lifetime*.

"Zealous theologians have attacked the orthodoxy of his creed; casualists have cavilled at the materialism of his ethical precepts; but he was doubtless a good man; he was unquestionably a great man, and he richly merits the title of 'the most useful man of any age'—a title which he would have envied beyond all the gifts of fortune and laurels of fame."—*Macaulay*.

## P R E F A C E.

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IF any good is accomplished by this memoir, it will be due, in no small degree, to Colonel E. W. Morgan, Superintendent of the Kentucky Military Institute, at whose suggestion it was prepared, and who kindly placed in the writer's hands a large mass of materials, most difficult to be obtained. Grateful acknowledgments are also made to several of Dr. Franklin's descendants; to the Rev. Dr. Dorr, of Christ Church, Philadelphia; and to General Winfield Scott, for their valuable contributions.

Small as this volume is, in comparison with those of Duane and Sparks, it will be found to contain various particulars not given in the larger works.

While an attempt has been made to vindicate the name of Dr. Franklin from the charge of infidelity, there has been no wish to conceal his faults, nor even to apologize for them. We have tried to draw his portrait with all faithfulness, and the public must judge of the degree of success with which this has been accomplished. It is as no advocate of party or sect that we have labored. The Patriot Philosopher was, emphatically, the friend of toleration,—believing it to be one means of making men most truly religious.

March, 1860.



"Franklin is dead! The genius that freed America and poured a flood of light over Europe, has returned to the bosom of the Divinity.

"The sage whom two worlds claim as their own, the man for whom the history of science and the history of empires contend with each other, held, without doubt, a high rank in the human race.

"I propose that it be decreed, that the National Assembly, during three days, shall wear mourning for Benjamin Franklin."—*Mirabeau*.

"A new town in the State of Massachusetts having done me the honor of naming itself after me, and proposing to build a steeple to their meeting-house, if I would give them a bell, I have advised the sparing themselves the expense of a steeple for the present, and that they would accept of books instead of a bell, sense being preferable to sound. These are therefore intended as the commencement of a little parochial library for the use of a society of intelligent, respectable farmers, such as our country people generally consist of."—*Dr. Franklin's Letter to Richard Price, in 1785.*

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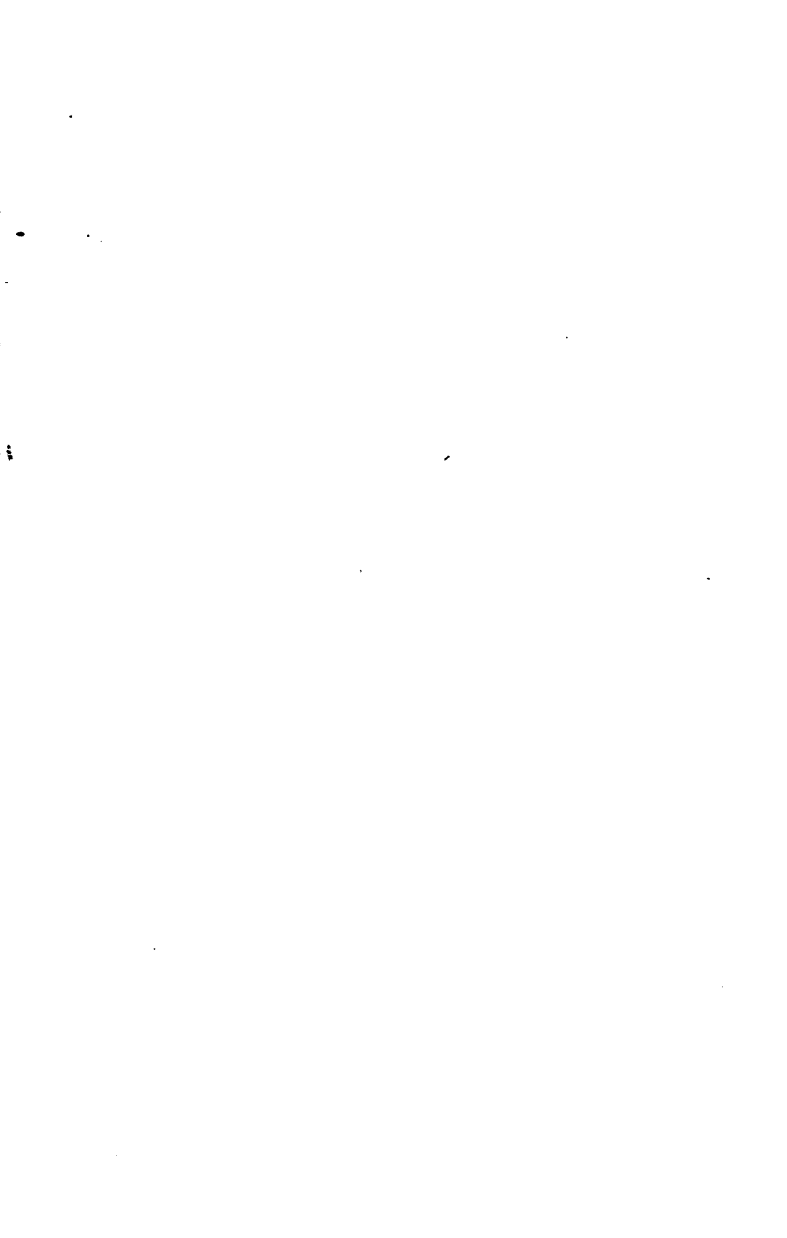
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**BIRTH-PLACE OF FRANKLIN.**

**Front Chap. 1.**

# LIFE OF DOCTOR FRANKLIN.

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## CHAPTER FIRST.

A grave charge, which many believe to be true—The purpose for which this book is written—Birth and parentage—Christening in the Old South Church—A large family—Putting out sons to trades—Higher views for Benjamin—His uncle's liberal offer—How Mr. Franklin got out of the fold—Something about Puritanism—Early promises of scholarship—The leader of the mischief-makers—The fishing-wharf—Speedy punishment—Mr. Franklin concludes to allow his son to select a trade for himself—Fresh difficulties.

THE writer once heard a popular lecturer pronounce Doctor Franklin an Infidel. No doubt others entertain this opinion concerning him. It is the fault of many of the biographies of our great men, that they only portray one side of them. We see them making wonderful discoveries in science, or fighting brave-

ly the battles of their country, or presiding with dignity in the chair of state,—while little is revealed concerning their thoughts and feelings. In this life of Dr. Franklin, we have no purpose to serve but that of truth. We believe him to have been a devoted patriot,—a man ready for every emergency,—and withal, one who feared God, and who endeavored in sincerity to serve Him. His example shows to the young men of our land, how much may be accomplished by setting out in life with a high and laudable ambition, and being guided by true and noble principles.

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN was born in Boston, January 17, 1706.

He was the youngest son of the youngest son for five generations, the fifteenth child of his father, out of a family of seventeen.

Josiah Franklin was an English non-conformist, who had come over to Boston about 1685; a man of strength and prudence of character,—a tallow-chandler and soap-boiler by trade. The mother of the future philosopher, represented a literary name of the old province of Massachusetts, being the daughter of Peter Folger, the author of a little poetical volume, entitled “A Looking-glass for the

Times," in which liberty of conscience was boldly asserted.\*

It appears from the records of the Old South Church, Boston, of which Mr. Franklin and his wife were members, that the subject of this memoir was baptized on the very day of his birth. The family occupied a house in Milk-street, opposite to the place of worship just referred to,—a picture of which we are glad to furnish for those of our readers who have a taste for such things.

---

\* This worthy couple were buried at Boston, where their distinguished son caused a monument to be placed over their graves, with this inscription :

JOSIAH FRANKLIN,  
AND  
ABIAH, HIS WIFE,  
LIE HERE INTERRED.  
THEY LIVED LOVINGLY TOGETHER IN WEDLOCK,  
FIFTY-FIVE YEARS;  
AND WITHOUT AN ESTATE, OR ANY GAINFUL EMPLOYMENT,  
BY CONSTANT LABOR, AND HONEST INDUSTRY,  
(WITH GOD'S BLESSING,)  
MAINTAINED A LARGE FAMILY COMFORTABLY;  
AND BROUGHT UP THIRTEEN CHILDREN AND SEVEN GRANDCHILDREN  
REPUTABLY.  
FROM THIS INSTANCE, READER,  
BE ENCOURAGED TO DILIGENCE IN THY CALLING,  
AND DISTRUST NOT PROVIDENCE.  
HE WAS A PIOUS AND PRUDENT MAN,  
SHE A DISCREET AND VIRTUOUS WOMAN.  
THEIR YOUNGEST SON,  
IN FILIAL REGARD TO THEIR MEMORY,  
PLACES THIS STONE.  
J. F. BORN 1655; DIED 1744. Æt. 89.  
A. F. BORN 1667; DIED 1752. Æt. 85.

At the time of which we are speaking, Boston was quite a small place compared with what it is now, but the people were industrious and enterprising, and worthy progenitors of those who in our day enjoy its prosperity and greatness.

With so large a family to provide for, Mr. Franklin was obliged to put out his sons as apprentices to different trades, as soon as they were old enough for the purpose. Benjamin, however, he resolved to devote to the ministry, and at eight years of age he was sent to the grammar-school, and soon gave promise of making a good scholar. The uncle after whom he was named, a devout and well-disposed man, had invented a system of shorthand by which he was enabled to take down the discourses of the celebrated preachers of the day,—and by way of encouraging his little nephew to pursue the course which his father had proposed,—he promised to make him a present of his choice collection, when he was ready to enter the pulpit.

We spoke of Mr. Franklin as a non-conformist. The family, for many generations before, had been members of the Church of England, and it was not until the reign of Charles the

Second, that any of them left the old Apostolic fold. Then, in consequence of some sectional difficulty, in which articles of religious faith had no concern, Josiah Franklin and his brother Benjamin, began to attend upon the preaching of the English dissenters—the rest of the family remaining steadfast in their attachment to the Church of their fathers.

A disposition like that possessed by our little hero, could never find much that was congenial in the cold and rigid severities of Puritanism,\* and while he regarded the piety

---

\* Not a few persons were delighted when Macaulay, in the first volume of his English History, ventured to make some statements in regard to the origin of the Church, which seemed to strip her of her lofty claims to be the kingdom of our Blessed Lord. The same individuals who take his authority in such matters, should listen with patience when he speaks of things more nearly concerning themselves. We quote the following fine passage from his third volume.

“The scrupulosity of the Puritan was not that sort of scrupulosity which the apostle had commanded believers to respect. It sprang not from morbid tenderness of conscience, but from censoriousness and spiritual pride: and none who had studied the New Testament could have failed to observe that, while we are charged carefully to avoid whatever may give scandal to the feeble, we are taught by divine precept and example to make no concession to the supercilious and uncharitable Pharisee. Was every thing which was not of the essence of religion to be given up as soon as it became displeasing to a knot of zealots, whose heads had been turned by conceit and the love

of his parents with respect and reverence, their particular form of religious belief became, in maturer years, actually repulsive to him.

Benjamin continued at the grammar-school about a year, and made rapid progress, but his father began to think that the expenses of a collegiate education would be more than he

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of novelty? Painted glass, music, holidays, fast-days, were not of the essence of religion. Were the windows of King's College Chapel to be broken at the demand of one set of fanatics? Was the organ of Exeter to be silenced to please another? Were all the village bells to be mute because Tribulation Wholesome, and Deacon Ananias thought them profane? Was Christmas no longer to be a day of rejoicing? Was Passion week no longer to be a season of humiliation? These changes, it is true, were not yet proposed. But if—so the High Church man reasoned—we once admit that what is harmless and edifying is to be given up because it offends some narrow under standings and some gloomy tempers, where are we to stop? And is it not probable, that, by thus attempting to heal one schism, we may cause another? All those things which the Puritans regard as the blemishes of the Church, are by a large part of the population reckoned among her attractions. May she not, in ceasing to give scandal to a few sour precisians, cease also to influence the hearts of many who now delight in her ordinances? Is it not to be apprehended, that, for every proselyte whom she allures from the meeting-house, ten of her old disciples may turn away from her maimed rites and dismantled temples, and that these new separatists may either form themselves into a sect far more formidable than the sect which we are now seeking to conciliate, or may, in the violence of their disgust at a cold and ignoble worship, be tempted to join in the solemn and gorgeous idolatry of Rome?"

would be able to meet. The lad also, as we may readily suppose, did not manifest any great delight at the thought of figuring as a Puritan divine, and the plans for his future course were suddenly changed.

He was accordingly taken from the grammar-school, and placed under the instruction of Mr. George Brownwell, who taught writing and arithmetic with success.

Benjamin soon learned to write a good hand, but his taste for figures proved to be small. At the age of ten, we find him in his father's shop, very busy in cutting wicks for the candles, filling the moulds, waiting upon customers, and running of errands. The business did not suit him at all, and living near the seaside, he soon fancied that he should prefer to go to sea as a sailor and learn something of the world.

Mr. Franklin discouraged this idea, and Benjamin had to content himself with becoming expert in swimming, and in the management of boats.

He was a sort of captain among the boys, and now and then led them into mischief. On one occasion, finding it rather too muddy to stand with comfort upon the marshy borders



of the mill-pond where they fished, it was proposed to build a wharf, and our young friend showed his comrades a large heap of stones, intended for a new house, which would just answer their purpose. Accordingly, as soon as the workmen had left for the evening, the little mischievous urchins, assembled in full force, and labored so diligently, that the wharf was speedily completed. Of course, the ring-leaders were soon detected, and received such a chastisement at the hands of their parents as they richly deserved.

Benjamin continued in the chandler-shop for two years, when his brother John, who had been brought up to his father's trade, married and set up business for himself in Rhode Island. This change alarmed the little fellow, as much more of the work now fell to his share, and he began to fear that he must spend all his days in this humble, and, to him, disagreeable employment. He did not attempt to conceal his apprehensions, and his father, dreading lest he might run off to sea, as his brother Josiah had done before, concluded that it would be better to select an avocation more agreeable to him.

It was finally determined that he should

learn the cutler's trade, and the boy was placed for some days on trial with Samuel Franklin, the son of his uncle Benjamin, who had been taught the business in London, and had just established himself in Boston. The fee demanded for the apprenticeship was not satisfactory to Mr. Franklin, and his son was taken home again.

We have thus traced Benjamin's course to the middle of his twelfth year. My readers must not suppose that he had lost his fondness for books, although we have said so little on the subject, and we shall speak of this in the next chapter.

## CHAPTER SECOND.

A bookworm—Voyages and travels—The dry old theological books—John Bunyan's works—Advantages and disadvantages—Cotton Mather's essay—Franklin's grateful remembrance of it—Bound apprentice in a printing-office—Books become more plenty with him—A poet in a small way—John Collins and his argumentative turn—Mr. Franklin criticises his son's style to some purpose—What an odd volume of the Spectator did—The printer's boy makes his escape from the "Old South"—"A more excellent way"—Learning to use milder and less offensive terms—Mastering old difficulties—Geometry and navigation.

**B**ENJAMIN FRANKLIN, from his infancy, had been passionately fond of reading, and all the money he could possibly obtain was laid out in books. Voyages and travels possessed a wonderful fascination for him, and Plutarch's Lives were read over again and again with increasing delight.

His father's collection of books was very limited, and consisted for the most part of those dry doctrinal discussions so poorly adapted to the capacities of a child, and which even those of adult years often read to little profit.

The first books which Benjamin could claim

as his own were John Bunyan's works, in separate small volumes,—and these he afterwards sold in order to purchase Burton's "Historical Collections."

The youth of our own day, who have a choice variety of books to select from, can hardly understand the condition of those of an earlier period, who were denied such precious privileges. Our forefathers, however, were more careful and attentive readers than many of us can claim to be; and they were seldom tempted by the prospect of something fresher, to lay aside a volume before its contents had been thoroughly examined. Even among his father's theological treasures, Benjamin found books which, if they served no better purpose, helped him to form habits of close attention, and encouraged mental discipline.

He never regretted the time which he had spent over "An Essay to do Good," by Dr. Cotton Mather,\* the old Puritan divine.

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\* On the 12th of May, 1784, Dr. Franklin thus expresses his obligations to this book, in a letter to Samuel Mather, written from Passy:

REVEREND SIR:

I received your kind letter, with your excellent advice to the people of the United States, which I read with great pleas-

As his son exhibited such a fondness for books, Mr. Franklin determined to make him a printer.

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ure, and hope it will be duly regarded. Such writings, though they may be lightly passed over by many readers, yet, if they make a deep impression on one active mind in a hundred, the effects may be considerable. Permit me to mention one little instance, which, though it relates to myself, will not be quite uninteresting to you. When I was a boy, I met with a book, entitled "Essays to do Good," which, I think, was written by your father. It had been so little regarded by a former possessor, that several leaves of it were torn out; but the remainder gave me such a turn of thinking, as to have an influence on my conduct through life; for I have always set a greater value on the character of a *doer of good*, than on any other kind of reputation; and if I have been, as you seem to think, a useful citizen, the public owes the advantage of it to that book.

You mention your being in your seventy-eighth year; I am in my seventy-ninth; we are grown old together. It is now more than sixty years since I left Boston, but I remember well both your father and grandfather, having heard them both in the pulpit, and seen them in their houses. The last time I saw your father was in the beginning of 1724, when I visited him after my first trip to Pennsylvania. He received me in his library, and on my taking leave showed me a shorter way out of the house through a narrow passage, which was crossed by a beam overhead. We were still talking as I withdrew, he accompanying me behind, and I turning partly towards him, when he said hastily, "*Stoop, stoop!*" I did not understand him till I felt my head hit against the beam. He was a man that never missed any occasion of giving instruction, and upon this he said to me, "*You are young, and have the world before you; stoop as you go through it, and you will miss many hard thumps.*" This advice, thus beat into my head, has frequently been of use

In 1717, James, an elder brother of Benjamin's, returned from England with a press and type, to begin business in Boston, and thus a favorable opening was found for this new arrangement. As the old inclination for going to sea still kept possession of the boy's mind, the anxious father bound him out as an apprentice to his brother James, in order to place as much restraint upon him as possible.

The young printer was now enabled to borrow and buy more books than before, and he sometimes sat up the greater part of the night engaged in reading.

His studious habits attracted the attention of Mr. Matthew Adams, a thriving merchant, who kindly offered the use of his library to the ambitious lad,—a privilege which was gratefully accepted.

About this time Benjamin became quite fond of reading poetry, and actually wrote some tolerable lines himself:—one of his productions being called forth by the melancholy shipwreck of Captain Worthelake and his two daughters. This ballad had an extensive sale, and the au-

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to me; and I often think of it, when I see pride mortified, and misfortunes brought upon people by their carrying their heads too high.—*Sparks' Collection of Franklin's Writings*, vol. x., p. 82

thor's vanity was considerably flattered. And here we must introduce one of Franklin's early friends. This was John Collins, a Boston boy, with whom he had become very intimate, and whose tastes seemed quite congenial with his own. They were both fond of argument, and carried on frequent discussions on various subjects.

Collins had the advantage of his antagonist in a ready flow of words, and the latter endeavored to remedy this defect on his part by committing his thoughts to writing. A long discussion was carried on, in a series of letters, on the grave question whether it was proper to extend the advantages of a liberal education to the female sex. Mr. Franklin chanced to come across some of his son's productions, and while commending the correctness of his spelling and punctuation, he criticised his slovenly and inaccurate style, and recommended more attention to it in future. This judicious advice was not neglected.

Soon after his father had drawn his attention to his careless mode of expressing his thoughts, Benjamin met with an odd volume of the "Spectator,"—that rare collection of English essays which has excited such a kindly influence upon

Dennie, Paulding, and Irving. The book was devoured with the greatest eagerness, and the young printer determined to make Addison's beautiful style a model for his own.

With this view, he would read over a few pages in the Spectator,\* and then laying aside the book, endeavor to express the same ideas in as simple and appropriate language as he could. This done, his own composition was carefully compared with the original, and corrections and improvements made. The command of a neat, transparent, graceful style is something well worth striving after, and we hope that Franklin's successful efforts in this respect may inspire our young readers with an ambition to make the same attempt. Reading continued to be Benjamin's favorite employment, whenever he could command a leisure hour; and it appears, from his own confession, that he often shut himself up in the printing-office on Sundays, engrossed with a book, while his father and the other members of the family were at the Old South meeting-house, listening

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\* It is pleasant to observe that Franklin always remembered his obligations to the Spectator. In his will he bequeaths to the son of his friend, Mrs. Hewson, "a set of Spectators, Tatlers, and Guardians, handsomely bound."



with commendable patience to the interminable discourses with which the congregation were uniformly favored.

Had Josiah Franklin been a worshipper in God's temple, — where the old Prayer-book\* was used, with its decent proprieties, its glori-

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\* "The English liturgy gains by being compared even with those fine ancient liturgies from which it is to a great extent taken. The essential qualities of devotional eloquence, conciseness, majestic simplicity, and pathetic earnestness of supplication, sobered by a profound reverence, are common between the translations and the originals. But in the subordinate graces of diction the originals must be allowed to be far inferior to the translations. And the reason is obvious. The technical phraseology of Christianity did not become a part of the Latin language till that language had passed the age of maturity, and was sinking into barbarism; but the technical phraseology of Christianity was found in the Anglo-Saxon and in the Norman-French long before the union of those two dialects had produced a third dialect superior to either. The Latin of the Roman Catholic services, therefore, is Latin in the last stage of decay. The English of our services is English in all the vigor and suppleness of early youth. To the great Latin writers, Terence and Lucretius, to Cicero and Cæsar, to Tacitus and Quintilian, the noblest compositions of Ambrose and Gregory, would have seemed to be, not merely bad writing, but senseless gibberish. The diction of our Book of Common Prayer, on the other hand, has, directly or indirectly, contributed to form the diction of almost every great English writer, and has extorted the admiration of the most accomplished Infidels and of the most accomplished Non-conformists—of such men as David Hume and Robert Hall."—*Macaulay's England*, vol. iii., p. 430.

ous anthems, and its soul-stirring litanies,—he would have found his studious son less anxious to escape from the performance of the public duties of religion. We do not intend by this remark to excuse the printer's boy from all blame, but merely to give an incidental warning against departures from the "old paths." He was always of a serious turn, and in after years, when he had learned a more excellent way of serving God than he had known before, he was most anxious that his family should follow it. Hence we find him writing to his wife: "I think you should go oftener to church;"\* and to his daughter: "Go constantly to church, whoever preaches. The act of devotion in the Common Prayer Book is your principal business there."†

But more of this hereafter.

While Franklin was listening with diligence to improve his style, he found two little sketches on the arts of Rhetoric and Logic, at the end of an old English grammar, which gave him some valuable hints.

Not long after, he procured Xenophon's "Memorable Things of Socrates," which indu-

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\* Sparks, vol. vi., p. 254.

† Ibid., p. 269.

ced him to lay aside an abrupt habit of contradiction and positive argumentation, that he had acquired, and to express himself in milder and more modest terms,—a much surer way of securing an attentive hearing and of disarming prejudice.

When about sixteen years of age, he read a book recommending a vegetable diet, and the views appeared so sensible that he at once adopted them. His brother James being unmarried, did not keep house, but boarded himself and his apprentices in another family. Benjamin's refusing to eat meat occasioned so much inconvenience, that he proposed to his brother to give him half the money he paid for his board, and he would board himself. James readily agreed to this, and from that time forward, instead of eating with the other printers, our hero dispatched his frugal meal of a bit of bread, a tart, or a bunch of raisins, and a glass of water; and then, with a clear head, and quickened apprehension, he seized his book. An additional fund for the purchase of books was thus secured.\*

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\* A caution ought to be expressed, however, since medical science condemns an exclusively vegetable diet, as tending to develop pulmonary disease.—*Ed.*

We referred in the first chapter to Benjamin's slow progress in arithmetic, during his brief career as a school-boy. He now became ashamed of his ignorance in this branch of learning, and taking up an old treatise on the subject, he went through it by himself with the greatest ease. He also studied some small works on geometry and navigation, and Locke's famous "Essay on the Human Understanding."

New and more stormy scenes will be introduced in our next chapter.

## CHAPTER THIRD.

The fourth American newspaper begins its career—A curious note—Advice and apprehensions—The printer's boy tries his hand at writing for the paper—"Who can the author be?"—James Franklin in prison—The apprentice assumes the editorial tripod—Quarrels between the brothers—A flimsy scheme—An open rupture—Benjamin goes to New York—Mr. Bradford befriends him—Journey to the Quaker City—His entrance described by himself—A meal of dry bread—Miss Read's amusement at his strange appearance—The Quaker meeting—"I'll show thee a better one"—Getting into business.

ON the 21st of August, 1721, James Franklin published the first number of the *New England Courant*. This was a noteworthy event, as being the *fourth* newspaper which appeared in America.\*

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\* "The first newspaper issued in North America, was printed in Boston, in 1690. Only one copy of that paper was known to be in existence. It was deposited in the State Paper Office in London, and was about the size of an ordinary sheet of letter-paper. It was stopped by the government. The *Boston News-Letter* was the first regular paper. It was first issued in 1704, and was printed by John Allen, in Bedding Lane. The contents of some of the early numbers were very peculiar. It had a speech of Queen Anne to Parliament, delivered 120 days

Some of his friends tried to persuade him not to engage in the undertaking, on the ground that it could not possibly succeed; as, in their opinion, the newspapers already in existence were quite enough for America.

In these days, when every thriving village in the land has its weekly sheet, and the larger

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previously, and this was the latest news from England. In one of the early numbers there was an announcement that by order of the postmaster-general of North America, the post between Boston and New York sets out once a fortnight. Negro men, women, and children were advertised to be sold; and a call was made upon a woman who had stolen a piece of fine lace worth fourteen shillings a yard, and upon another who had conveyed a piece of fine calico under her riding-hood, to return the same, or be exposed in the newspapers.

This pioneer paper was published for 74 years; it was the leading Tory paper, prior to the Revolution. The *Boston Gazette* was the organ of the Patriots, and was issued at Watertown. At the commencement of the Revolutionary war, there were but thirty-seven newspapers in the United States. Of this number only eight were committed to the British government, but five others were brought over. The oldest existing paper in Massachusetts was the *Worcester Spy*, first published in this city during 1770, but removed to the western part of the State on the occupation of Boston by the British troops. Our country, although the youngest in the world, outstrips all others in the number of publications and newspapers sold. The number of copies of newspapers printed here is four times greater than in Great Britain, though England has twice as many magazines. The number of religious newspapers here, and the extent of their circulation, forms a striking social characteristic."—*Publisher's Circular*.

towns issue dailies innumerable, such anticipations of failure force one to smile.

James Franklin persevered in carrying his purpose into effect, and his brother Benjamin besides assisting in setting the types and printing off the sheets, was employed to deliver the papers to the subscribers. . But our young friend was ambitious to do more than this, and he determined to try his hand at making some communications for the press.

Being a mere boy, he was afraid that James would object to printing any thing of his in the paper; he accordingly disguised his writing, and put his little piece by night under the office door.

The next morning, the publisher showed the anonymous communication to the knot of gentlemen who were accustomed to meet at the printing-office to chat about politics. They read it, spoke of it with approbation, and hazarded various conjectures as to who the unknown author could be. The printer's boy, who was listening most attentively to their conversation, was delighted to hear them attribute his juvenile production to several individuals of high standing for character and learning. With this encouragement, he continued

his contributions to the paper, in the same mysterious way, until, having exhausted his stock of information, he told the whole story to his brother.

James was much surprised, as may be well supposed, but he was so much afraid lest Benjamin might become too vain, that he scarcely gave him the credit he deserved; and showed him, on various occasions, by his harsh and tyrannical treatment, that he not only understood his position as an elder brother, but as a master whom his apprentice was bound implicitly to obey.

While the course of events was thus flowing on in a troubled current, a piece appeared in the *New England Courant* which gave offence to the assembly, and James Franklin was put in prison for a month, because he would not discover the author.

Benjamin was also brought before the Council and admonished.

During his brother's confinement, he had the management of the paper, and notwithstanding their private differences, he gave the rulers some hard rubs, which he knew would be gratifying to James. Other persons, however, began to set him down as a pert young fellow,



who was quite too fond of satire. The prisoner's discharge was accompanied with this sagacious order: that "*James Franklin* should no longer print the newspaper, called *The New England Courant*."

Some of his friends advised him to evade the order by changing the title of the paper, but he thought it better to allow it to be issued in the name of *Benjamin Franklin*.

Fearing lest the Assembly might arrest him, as still printing the paper by his apprentice, he wrote a discharge on the back of Benjamin's old indenture, to be shown in case of necessity, at the same time making him sign a fresh agreement, which was to be kept secret. And so *The New England Courant* appeared for several months, with the printer's boy as its nominal editor.

Fresh difficulties soon arose between the brothers, and the younger, knowing that James would be afraid to disclose the nature of the arrangement which existed between them, took advantage of the discharge from his apprenticeship, and left the office. He always regretted this as one of the wrong acts of his life.

James Franklin took good care that his rebellious apprentice should obtain no employ-

ment in Boston, and the lad, through the assistance of his friend Collins, secured his passage in a sloop bound for New York. Accordingly, in October, 1723, at the age of seventeen, he found himself three hundred miles from home, a stranger in that city, with no letters of introduction, and with very little money in his pocket. Fortunately, his former passion for going to sea had left him, or it might now have been readily gratified. Benjamin offered his services to Mr. William Bradford, an old-established printer, who had once lived in Philadelphia. He could give him no employment, but advised him to go to Pennsylvania. "My son at Philadelphia," he said, "has lately lost his principal hand, Aquila Rose, by death; if you go thither, I believe he may employ you." The young man lost no time in following this advice, and was soon on his way to the Quaker City. He travelled part of the way in an open boat, and part on foot, and after some curious adventures, he landed at Market-street wharf, about nine o'clock on a bright Sunday morning in October. We must allow him to describe his entrance into that city.

"I was in my working dress, my best clothes coming round by sea. I was dirty from my

being so long in the boat. My pockets were stuffed out with shirts and stockings, and I knew no one, nor where to look for lodging. Fatigued with walking, rowing, and the want of sleep, I was very hungry; and my whole stock of cash consisted in a single dollar, and about a shilling in copper coin, which I gave to the boatmen for my passage. At first they refused it, on account of my having rowed, but I insisted on their taking it. Man is sometimes more generous when he has little money, than when he has plenty; perhaps to prevent his being thought to have but little.

“I walked towards the top of the street, gazing about, till near Market-street, where I met a boy with bread. I had often made a meal of dry bread, and, inquiring where he had bought, I went immediately to the baker’s he directed me to. I asked for biscuits, meaning such as we had at Boston; that sort, it seems, was not made in Philadelphia. I then asked for a three-penny loaf, and was told they had none. Not knowing the different prices, nor the names of the different sorts of bread, I told him to give me three-penny worth of any sort. He gave me, accordingly, three great puffy rolls. I was surprised at the quantity, but took it,

and, having no room in my pockets, walked off with a roll under each arm, and eating the other. Thus I went up Market-street as far as Fourth-street, passing by the door of Mr. Read, my future wife's father, when she, standing at the door saw me, and thought I made, as I certainly did, a most awkward, ridiculous appearance. Then I turned and went down Chestnut-street and part of Walnut-street, eating my roll all the way, and, coming round, found myself again at Market-street wharf, near the boat I came in, to which I went for a draught of the river water; and, being filled with one of my rolls, gave the other two to a woman and her child that came down the river in the boat with us, and were waiting to go farther.

"Thus refreshed, I walked again up the street, which by this time had many clean-dressed people in it, who were all walking the same way. I joined them, and thereby was led into the great meeting-house of the Quakers, near the market. I sat down among them, and, after looking round a while, and hearing nothing said, being very drowsy through labor and want of rest the preceding night, I fell fast asleep, and continued so till the meeting broke up, when some one was

kind enough to rouse me. This, therefore, was the first house I was in, or slept in, in Philadelphia. I then walked down towards the river, and looking in the faces of every one, I met a young Quaker man, whose countenance pleased me, and, accosting him, requested he would tell me where a stranger could get a lodging. We were then near the sign of the Three Mariners. 'Here,' said he, 'is a house where they receive strangers, but it is not a reputable one; if thee wilt walk with me, I'll show thee a better one;' and he conducted me to the Crooked Billet in Water-street. There I got a dinner; and while I was eating, several questions were asked me, as, from my youth and appearance, I was suspected of being a runaway.

"After dinner, my host having shown me to a bed, I laid myself on it without undressing, and slept till six in the evening, when I was called to supper. I went to bed again very early, and slept very soundly till the next morning. Then I dressed myself as neat as I could, and went to Andrew Bradford the printer's. I found in the shop the old man his father, whom I had seen at New York, and who, travelling on horseback, had got to

Philadelphia before me. He introduced me to his son, who received me civilly, gave me a breakfast, but told me he did not at present want a hand, being lately supplied with one; but there was another printer in town, lately set up, one Keimer, who perhaps might employ me; if not, I should be welcome to lodge at his house, and he would give me a little work to do now and then, till fuller business should offer.

“The old gentleman said he would go with me to the new printer; and when we found him, ‘Neighbor,’ said Bradford, ‘I have brought to see you a young man of your business; perhaps you may want such a one.’ He asked me a few questions, put a composing-stick in my hand to see how I worked, and then said he would employ me soon, though he had just then nothing for me to do. And, taking old Bradford, whom he had never seen before, to be one of the town’s people that had a good will for him, entered into a conversation on his present undertaking and prospects; while Bradford, not discovering [not making known] that he was the other printer’s father, on Keimer’s saying he expected soon to get the greatest part of the business

into his own hands, drew him on, by artful questions, and starting little doubts, to explain all his views, what influence he relied on, and in what manner he intended to proceed. I, who stood by and heard all, saw immediately that one was a crafty old sophister, and the other a true novice. Bradford left me with Keimer, who was greatly surprised when I told him who the old man was."

## CHAPTER FOURTH.

Keimer's printing-house—Aquila Rose—One of the French prophets—Taking board at Mr. Read's—The anguish which parents are made to suffer by their thoughtless children—The retreat of the runaway discovered—Makes the acquaintance of Sir William Keith—Large promises—Franklin goes back to Boston for money—Unsuccessful result of his application—Collins costs his friend a pretty penny—Sir William renews his promises on a larger scale—Love matters—The Annis sets sail—"I don't know such a person!"—The Governor's falsehoods discovered—Making the best of circumstances—Another cause of regret.

WE left Franklin, at the close of the last chapter, in Keimer's printing-house. It must have been a very humble establishment, as it could only boast of an old damaged press, and a small worn-out fount of English types.

Keimer was at this time engaged in composing an Elegy on Aquila Rose,\*—the young man whose death had been mentioned to

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\* A brief account of Aquila Rose and Samuel Keimer will be found in Duyckinck's "Cyclopædia of American Literature," vol. i., p. 97. Some specimens of the poetry of both are there presented; also the elegy composed by the survivor on the death of his friend.



Franklin, while he tarried in New York. He was much respected in Philadelphia, and had been secretary to the assembly, and enjoyed some reputation as a poet.

Samuel Keimer was quite a character in his way. A native of the old world, where he had been one of the French prophets, he was disposed to set up in America as the Evangelist of a new religion. Although something of a scholar, he knew very little of the art of printing; and Franklin discovered, before they parted, that he was a good deal of a knave.

As it did not suit Keimer's ideas of propriety that the young man, while employed in his office, should be living with Bradford, he proposed to get lodgings for him at Mr. Read's, with whose fair daughter we are already slightly acquainted. This arrangement was accordingly made, and something important grew out of it, as we shall hereafter have occasion to mention.

Franklin soon began to make acquaintances among the young people of Philadelphia who were fond of reading, and he spent his evenings very pleasantly.

All this while his father's family had received no information concerning him,—his friend

Collins keeping the secret with the utmost fidelity. We cannot forbear remarking here, that this was another grave error in the young man's career, which no doubt occasioned him many disquieting thoughts afterwards.

Giddy youths are too apt to forget how much anguish anxious parents suffer on their account; and they should endeavor to be more considerate towards those whose tender affection can never be fully repaid.

An incident now occurred, which occasioned Franklin's return home sooner than he had intended. He had a brother-in-law, Robert Homes; the master of a little sloop which plied between Boston and Delaware. While the vessel was lying at New Castle, forty miles below Philadelphia, he accidentally heard where the young printer was, and wrote him a kind letter, telling him of the distress of his relatives on his account, and advising him to go back to Boston. Franklin replied to this communication, making out a pretty strong case for himself. It so happened that Sir William Keith, governor of the province, was then at New Castle, and Captain Homes, when the answer came, spoke to his excellency of his truant brother-in-law, and showed him the

epistle. The governor was astonished when he was told the writer's age, and began to talk in his usual large way of the great things which he was disposed to do for so promising a youth. Upon returning to Philadelphia, Sir William very condescendingly called at the printing-office, and introduced himself to the astonished journeyman, and insisted upon his coming to see him at his own house. The governor proposed to Franklin to set up business for himself, and promised to secure the public printing for him; at the same time urging him to go at once to Boston and obtain pecuniary assistance from his father.

About the end of April, 1724, a little vessel was advertised to sail for Massachusetts, and the young man set off for home, carrying a most flattering letter from Sir William, in which his former promises were repeated, in even stronger terms than before. After a two weeks' voyage, he landed at Boston, having been absent about seven months.

His appearance occasioned much surprise, and his parents rejoiced over their lost son.

Mr. Josiah Franklin was a man of too much solid sense to take mere words for more than they were worth; and while he rejoiced to

hear so good an account of Benjamin, he thought it better for him to work on quietly in a small way until he became of age, when he would be ready to do all in his power to advance his interests.

Young Collins was so much pleased with his friend's account of Philadelphia, that he set off without delay to try his fortune there himself. When Franklin stopped at New York to inquire for him, on his return to Philadelphia, he found him in a wretched plight, having spent all his money in drinking and gambling, and our young printer was obliged to pay his bills at the lodging-house, and advance him means to prosecute the journey.

While tarrying in New York, Franklin, strangely enough, made the acquaintance of another eminent personage. This was Governor Burnet, son of the famous bishop of that name.

Franklin at last got safely back to Philadelphia with his dissipated companion, who continued to impose on his generosity until, being invited to go to Barbados as a teacher, we lose sight of him altogether.

Governor Keith professed to be disappointed at the result of the trip to Boston, but de-

clared that if the young man's father was too prudent to risk any thing for him, he would establish him in business at his own cost.

All this sounded so fair, that Franklin had not a doubt of his sincerity, and began to build fine castles in the air, which he afterwards discovered were resting on very unsubstantial foundations.

Thus far these grand prospects had been kept a profound secret, or it is probable that some friend, who knew the governor better, would have advised the unsuspecting youth not to rely on him too implicitly.

Every thing seemed to be going on swimmingly. At Sir William's suggestion, Franklin had made out a list of what would be needed in his printing-office, with a view of sending to England for them, when the fair-spoken governor remarked that perhaps he had better go over and select the type and other necessities himself. "Then," said he, "while there, you may make acquaintance, and establish correspondences in the bookselling and stationery line."

Franklin agreed that this might be advantageous, when the governor added, "Then get yourself ready to go with the Annis," which

was the yearly ship, and the only one passing between London and Philadelphia.

As some months would elapse before the ship sailed, the young man continued to work with Keimer, who little suspected all the grand schemes which had been contrived.

Meanwhile, Miss Read is found to be a very agreeable person, and Franklin pays her a good deal of attention, which finally ends in his making proposals of marriage. As a long and dangerous voyage was about to be made, and the parties were both very young, it was prudently arranged by the fair girl's mother, that no positive engagement should be entered into until the printer should come back from England, and become settled in business.

As the time for his departure drew nearer, Franklin called upon the governor for the letters of introduction which had been promised him, but was put off from day to day, under various pretences, until the Annis was actually spreading her sails for the voyage.

He then hastened to Sir William's house to take his leave and receive the letters, when his secretary came out and said that his excellency was particularly engaged, but that the letters should be sent in good season; at the same

time wishing him a good voyage and a speedy return. Franklin was a little puzzled, but believing that all would be right in the end, he gave himself no further concern about it until the ship had got out upon the broad ocean. Understanding that Governor Keith's despatches had been brought to the captain, he asked him for the letters that were to be under his care. The officer replied that all were put into the mail-bag together, but that before they reached England, he should have an opportunity of selecting them for himself. With a pleasant company, and good living, the time passed quickly away ; and when they entered the Channel, the captain kept his word.

Franklin looked over the letters, and found some upon which his name had been put, as being under his care, and also a few others which were addressed to booksellers and stationers, which he supposed might be intended for him. Arriving in London on the 24th of December, 1724, he waited first upon the stationer, delivering the letter as from Governor Keith. "I don't know such a person," said he ; but opening the letter, he continued, "oh ! this is from Riddlesden. I have lately found him to be a complete rascal, and I will have

nothing more to do with him, nor receive any letters from him." So saying, he handed the epistle to the astonished youth, and turning on his heel, went back to serve a customer.

Franklin's eyes were now opened, and he discovered, with no little mortification, that the governor had been practising a gross deception upon him.

Such conduct on the part of Sir William appears almost unaccountable. It is a simple act of justice to the English government to mention, that he was not an officer appointed by the crown, but one of the creatures of the Proprietaries. The descendants of Penn selected governors of Pennsylvania to share with themselves the perquisites of place, even to the degree of participating in the gratuities which they were able to get by special vote of obsequious legislative assemblies.

Sir William Keith sometimes disregarded the instructions of the Proprietaries, but there is no doubt but that he was chosen at first under the impression that he would be a pliant and obedient servant. He had acquired a foolish habit of saying agreeable things to everybody, and this is perhaps the secret of his shameless behavior towards the poor



printer-boy. Franklin found himself in an extremely awkward position, but with his accustomed philosophy, he made the best of circumstances, and began to work at Palmer's, a famous London printing-house, where he continued almost a year. We regret to say that during this period he was exceedingly remiss about writing to the confiding girl, on the other side of the ocean, whose affections he had so successfully won. This was another error of his life, upon which he always looked back with sorrow.

## CHAPTER FIFTH.

Lessons in frugality and sobriety—"The Water-American"—  
A new friend—Experiments in swimming—How to learn this  
art—Curious experiment—Franklin returns to Philadelphia—  
Changes among old acquaintances—Brief career as a merchant  
—In Keimer's office once more—A new firm—The Junto—  
Editing a newspaper—A library established—One partner  
doing the work of both—A better arrangement—Characteristic  
anecdote—An essay on paper currency—Marriage.

WHILE working in the London printing-house, Franklin tried to teach his fellow-apprentices some of his own frugal and temperate habits. They were accustomed to spend a large part of their daily earnings at tippling-houses, under the impression that their strength could only be kept up by drinking strong beer. Franklin, on the contrary, insisted that good cold water would serve even a better purpose, and the English workmen were obliged to confess that the *Water-American*, as they called him, could perform more labor than themselves. Probably, he found very few who were willing to follow his example, no matter how clearly his point was establish-

ed. During his sojourn in London, our hero became acquainted with a young man named Wygate, who, having wealthy relations, had been better educated than most of printers. He was a tolerable Latin scholar, and spoke French, and the two friends were of great benefit to each other.

Among other things, Franklin taught Wygate to swim,—an accomplishment in which the Boston lad greatly excelled.

In a letter written long afterwards, the great American philosopher thus speaks on the subject:

“I do not know how far corks or bladders, may be useful in learning to swim, having never seen much trial of them. Possibly, they may be of service in supporting the body while you are learning what is called the stroke, or that manner of drawing in and striking out the hands and feet, that is necessary to produce progressive motion. But you will be no swimmer till you can place some confidence in the power of the water to support you; I would therefore advise the acquiring that confidence in the first place; especially, as I have known several, who, by a little of the practice necessary for that purpose,

have insensibly acquired the stroke, taught as it were by nature. The practice I mean is this. Choosing a place where the water deepens gradually, walk coolly into it till it is up to your breast, then turn round, your face to the shore, and throw an egg into the water between you and the shore. It will sink to the bottom, and be easily seen there, as your water is clear. It must lie in water so deep as that you cannot reach it to take it up but by diving for it. To encourage yourself in order to do this, reflect that your progress will be from deeper to shallower water, and that at any time you may, by bringing your legs under you and standing on the bottom, raise your head far above the water. Then plunge under it with your eyes open, throwing yourself towards the egg, and endeavoring by the action of your hands and feet against the water, to get forward till within reach of it. In this attempt you will find that the water buoys you up against your inclination; that it is not so easy a thing to sink as you imagined; that you cannot but by active force get down to the egg. Thus you feel the power of the water to support you, and learn to confide in that power; while your endeavors to over-

come it, and to reach the egg, teach you the manner of acting on the water with your feet and hands, which action is afterwards used in swimming, to support your head higher above water, or to go forward through it."

Again, in another letter to a different person, he adds the following interesting observations :

"When I was a boy, I amused myself one day with flying a kite; and approaching the bank of a pond, which was near a mile broad, I tied the string to a stake, and the kite ascended to a very considerable height above the pond, while I was swimming. In a little time, being desirous of amusing myself with my kite, and enjoying at the same time the pleasure of swimming, I returned, and, loosening from the stake the string with the little stick which was fastened to it, went again into the water, where I found, that, lying on my back, and holding the stick in my hands, I was drawn along the surface of the water in a very agreeable manner. Having then engaged another boy to carry my clothes round the pond, to a place which I pointed out to him on the other side, I began to cross the pond with my kite, which carried me quite

over without the least fatigue, and with the greatest pleasure imaginable. I was only obliged occasionally to halt a little in my course, and resist its progress, when it appeared that, by following too quick, I lowered the kite too much; by doing which occasionally, I made it rise again. I have never since that time practised this singular mode of swimming, though I think it not impossible to cross in this manner, from Dover to Calais. The packet-boat, however, is still preferable.”\*

When Franklin had spent almost eighteen months in London, a good offer was made him to return to Philadelphia, and engage in the mercantile business, and as he had begun to feel weary of so long an absence from his native land, he gladly embraced it. Sailing from Gravesend on the 23d of July, 1726, he landed at Philadelphia on the 11th of October, where he found that various changes had taken place. He kept a journal of the voyage, which is published as an appendix to Sparks' Biography.

Sir William Keith had been superseded as governor by Major Gordon. Franklin occa-

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\* Sparks, vol. vi., pp. 287, 293.

sionally met his old acquaintance walking the streets as a common citizen ; but the deceitful man seemed ashamed at seeing him, and they passed each other without exchanging a word. The young man himself was ready, perhaps, to make more allowance for Sir William's conduct, when he thought of his own neglect of Miss Read.

Poor girl, she had suffered much anxiety and mortification, and as her friends despaired of ever hearing from her thoughtless admirer again, they had persuaded her to marry a potter, named Rogers. He proved to be a trifling, dissipated fellow, and they soon parted. Rogers got into debt and ran off to the West Indies, where he died.

Franklin was now engaged as a clerk in the store of Mr. Denham, the worthy Quaker merchant with whom he had come over from London ; and every thing went on successfully until 1727, when both of them were taken very sick. Mr. Denham died, and the young man made a narrow escape from the grave. Once more thrown upon the wide world, he accepted a situation with his old employer, Keimer, who had increased his business considerably, and was doing well.

Franklin found a number of raw hands in the office, whom he was expected to regulate and instruct, and his employer had determined in his own mind, that when these had learned to do the work to his satisfaction, he would dismiss the young man, whose wages would thus be saved.

The principal and his assistant soon quarrelled, and the latter left the office.

One of our young friend's associates in Keimer's office was Hugh Meredith, a Welsh Pennsylvanian, thirty years of age, an honest, sensible man, but somewhat disposed to intemperance. He had become much attached to Franklin, and when the disagreement with Keimer occurred, he proposed that they should form a partnership themselves, Meredith feeling sure that his father would be willing to advance money for the purpose.

After various difficulties, which were all finally settled, this arrangement was made, and Franklin and Meredith began their career as printers.

At this time there was not a good book-seller's shop in any of the colonies south of Boston; the printers of New York and Philadelphia selling only paper, almanacs, ballads, and a few ordinary school-books.



Some months before he set up in business, Franklin organized a sort of literary club among the young men of Philadelphia, called the *Junto*, which met one evening in a week for debating various questions in morals, politics, and natural philosophy. As the members of the club were generally fond of reading, and books were hard to be obtained, it was proposed that they should bring together all the volumes they possessed, and thus form the nucleus of a small library. Finding the advantage of this little collection, Franklin recommended that a subscription should be opened for a public library,—drawing up the plan and rules himself, and being the chief agent in its successful organization.

The *Junto* lasted many years, and was a means not only of improvement, but of political influence, as his opportunities for exercising it increased.

In September, 1729, the two young printers purchased the *Pennsylvania Gazette*, which had then only reached its fortieth number;—and it now appeared in a new and better dress, and was conducted with considerable ability. Aside from the money which he had furnished, Meredith was of little service, as he was no

compositor, a poor pressman, and seldom sober. Franklin, therefore, had the principal share of the burden to sustain. His friends regretted his connection with so thriftless a partner, but he tried to make the best of it. No indifferent work was allowed to go out of the office, and people soon began to discover the difference between the coarse, blundering way in which jobs were done elsewhere, and the elegance and correctness which distinguished the issues of the new office. The consequence was, that the public printing was transferred to it, and prospects began to brighten daily.

The enterprising editor, now in his twenty-third year, wielded the pen with a bold hand, and some remarks which he made on an exciting controversy of the day, added many to the list of subscribers to the *Gazette*.

A characteristic anecdote has been related of Franklin, illustrative of his independence as an editor. Soon after the establishment of his newspaper, he found occasion to remark, with some degree of freedom, on the public conduct of one or two persons of high standing in Philadelphia. This course was disapproved by some of his patrons, who sought an opportunity to convey to him their views of the subject,

and what they represented to be the opinion of his friends. He listened patiently, and replied by requesting that they would favor him with their company at supper, and bring with them the other gentlemen who had expressed dissatisfaction. The time arrived, and the guests assembled. He received them cordially, and listened again to their friendly reproofs of his editorial conduct. At length supper was announced; but, when the guests had seated themselves around the table, they were surprised to see nothing before them but two puddings, made of coarse meal, called *sawdust puddings* in the common phrase, and a stone pitcher filled with water. He helped them all, and then applied himself to his own plate, partaking freely of the repast, and urging his friends to do the same. They taxed their politeness to the utmost, but all in vain; their appetites refused obedience to the will. Perceiving their difficulty, Franklin at last arose and said: "*My friends, any one who can subsist upon sawdust pudding and water, as I can, needs no man's patronage.*"

In 1730, Franklin was released from his long engagement with Meredith, whose father had been unable to advance as much as had been

promised for the establishment of the young men in business. By this time, however, other friends who had observed the prudence, industry, and sobriety with which he had managed his affairs, came forward to aid him, and he began to feel himself on the high road to success. He had done himself some credit by the publication of a pamphlet, entitled "A Modest Inquiry into the Nature and Necessity of a Paper Currency;" and in the autumn of 1730 he added to his happiness by marrying Miss Read, who had long been dejected and miserable, and for whose sufferings he knew that he was in a great measure accountable.

## CHAPTER SIXTH.

Rewards of diligence—Standing before kings—An industrious wife—The first silver spoons—Novel mode of dealing with loungers—Poor Richard's Almanac—Franklin's religious views at this stage of his career—Clinging to Presbyterianism as long as he could—The eloquent preacher who wrote but poorly—Becomes acquainted with the Church—A pew-holder for sixty years—Attending worship under difficulties—Resumes his studies—Visit to Boston—Last interview with his brother James—Clerk of the Assembly—Appointed postmaster—A prayer-book stolen.

**J**OSIAH FRANKLIN had so often repeated to his son the proverb of Solomon, "Seest thou a man diligent in his calling; he shall yet stand before kings, he shall not stand before mean men," that he was naturally inclined to be industrious and frugal. He playfully observes in his autobiography, "Though I did not think that I should ever literally stand before kings, I have stood before five, and even had the honor of sitting down with one, the King of Denmark, to dinner."

Franklin's efforts to rise in the world would have been effectually defeated, had his wife been indisposed to aid him; but she cheerfully

folded and stitched pamphlets, kept shop, and bought rags for the paper-makers, besides attending to her household duties. They employed no idle servants, their table was plain and simple, and their furniture of the cheapest sort.

The printer's breakfast consisted, for a long while, of bread and milk, which was eaten out of a twopenny earthen porringer, with a pewter spoon. "But mark" he says, "how luxury will enter families, and make a progress, in spite of principle. Being called one morning to breakfast, I found it in a china bowl, with a spoon of silver! They had been bought for me without my knowledge by my wife, and had cost her the enormous sum of three-and-twenty shillings; for which she had no other excuse or apology to make, but that she thought *her* husband deserved a silver spoon and china bowl as well as any of his neighbors. This was the first appearance of plate and china in our house; which afterwards, in a course of years, as our wealth increased, augmented gradually to several hundred pounds in value."

The following story is told of Franklin's mode of treating the idle persons who are dis-

posed to lounge about the shops of their more industrious acquaintances. One fine morning when the young printer was busy in preparing his newspaper for the press, a lazy fellow stepped into the store, and spent an hour or more looking over the books, and taking one in his hand, asked the shop-boy the price.

"One dollar," was the answer. "One dollar," said the lounge, "can't you take less than that?" "No, sir; one dollar is the price."

Another hour had nearly passed, when the lounge asked, "Is Mr. Franklin at home?" "Yes, he is in the printing-office." "I want to see him," said the lounge.

The shop-boy immediately informed Mr. Franklin that a gentleman was in the store waiting to see him. Franklin was soon behind the counter, when the lounge, with book in hand, addressed him thus :

"Mr. Franklin, what is the lowest you can take for this book?"

"One dollar and a quarter," was the ready answer.

"One dollar and a quarter! Why your young man asked only a dollar."

"True," said Franklin ; "and I could better

afford to have taken a dollar then, than to have been taken out of the office."

The lounge seemed surprised, and wishing to end the parley of his own making, he said,

"Come, Mr. Franklin, tell me what is the lowest you can take for it."

"One dollar and a half."

"A dollar and a half! Why you offered it yourself for a dollar and a quarter."

"Yes," said Franklin; "and I had better have taken that price then, than a dollar and a half now."

The lounge paid down the price, and went about his business—if he had any—and Franklin returned into the printing-office.\*

In 1732, Franklin first published his popu-

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\* "When I first visited Philadelphia" remarks General Scott, in a communication to the writer, "almost half a century ago, many elderly people there abounded in unedited anecdotes of Dr. Franklin. I believe I can at this moment only recall two of any characteristic merit.

"Without any journeyman, apprentice, or shop-boy, though he kept a few shelves of books and stationery for sale, he brought down a form of types into the store, at which he worked in the absence of customers; while, to save time and breath, he wrote on the outer door, '*Walk in without knocking!*' a contrivance supposed to be original with him. While thus employed, and in the act of setting up the word *no*, an Ephraim Broadbrim, who, drawing, made long pauses between words and syllables, came in and inquired, 'Does friend Ow-en live



lar almanac, under the name of *Richard Saunders*, which was continued for about twenty-five years, and commonly called "Poor Richard's Almanac." He endeavored to make it both entertaining and useful, and it came to be in such demand, that he often sold ten thousand copies annually, and derived considerable profit from it. As the almanac circulated among many families who had few books, he took care to fill all the little spaces between the remarkable days of the calendar, with practical sentences, and instructive hints in matters of morality and virtue.

And this reminds us to say something of Franklin's religious opinions, at this stage of his history. We mentioned before, the early dislike and abhorrence which he cherished for the Puritan system, in which he had been trained up, and by the time he was fifteen, as he honestly confesses, he had become a thorough Deist. It is awful to think of a young man occupying such a position as this.

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here?" Franklin replied, with a pause between the letters, 'N-o'!

"During his residence in France, Dr. Franklin remarked, on a certain occasion, that 'In making a fortune, enough is just a little more than one has!'"

Further reading and reflection convinced him of his error, and although he still shrunk back from adopting such dogmas as the eternal decrees of God, election, and reprobation, he lent his influence to further the cause of Presbyterianism in Philadelphia, out of respect to his parents, and cheerfully paid his yearly quota towards the preacher's support. He was not then a regular attendant upon public worship, having been provoked that the discourses which he heard, when he did go, were too controversial, and showing a greater anxiety to make people bigoted *Presbyterians* than good *citizens*.

Franklin about this time conceived the bold idea of arriving at moral perfection,—and laying down for himself a set of rigid rules which he determined strictly to observe. The experiment ended as might be supposed. Without the help of God's grace, sought for in prayer, and in the diligent use of other appointed means, all our efforts at right doing will prove ineffectual and vain. In 1734, a young Presbyterian preacher arrived in Philadelphia, who delivered with a good voice and apparently extempore, most excellent discourses, and drew quite a crowd after him. Some of

the old-fashioned Presbyterians, however, pronounced him to be unsound in doctrine, and began to oppose him. Franklin admired the preacher, because he spent more time in teaching the need of good works, than in idle disputings about the decrees of God; and warmly espoused his cause. A controversy sprang up, and the divine who could preach so eloquently, proved to be a very poor writer. Indeed, he wielded the pen so awkwardly, that he was obliged to apply to Franklin to prepare his answers for him. In the midst of all this excitement, it was discovered that the elegant preacher stole his sermons from printed books, and his friends at once abandoned him to his fate. Franklin ceased to attend upon the Presbyterian services, from this time forward, although he continued, for some years, his subscription for the support of them.

Circumstances now made him acquainted, to some extent, with the peculiarities and practices of the Church, which he found much more to his taste. His wife's family were Episcopalians, and attendants at old Christ Church.\*

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\* "As I went up, one Sunday morning, to worship in the venerable Christ Church, around which cluster so many inter-

For sixty years Franklin himself owned a pew there, and during part of the time he was a member of the vestry. It is true he enjoyed a poor opportunity for going to church very often in Philadelphia for the last thirty-three

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esting associations of the past, I felt that it was a twofold sanctuary—a sanctuary of religion and of patriotism. The exterior is the same that it was when the later colonial governors and officers of state, when Washington and Franklin, when Congress and the officers of the Continental army went there to worship.”—*Lossing's Field Book of the Revolution*, vol. ii., p. 248.

The first place of worship belonging to the Church of England, was built in Philadelphia, in 1695, of which the Rev. Mr. Clayton was minister. In 1700, the Rev. Evan Evans came over, and was very successful in gathering a congregation. The first edifice used by the congregation of Christ Church was built under his direction.—See *Dorr's History of Christ Church, Philadelphia*. Mr. Evans remained in the colony eighteen years, having Mr. Thomas as his assistant in Christ Church, his own labors being extended to the neighboring settlements.

William III. allowed £50 a year to the clergyman at Christ Church, and £30 to the schoolmaster, and Queen Anne presented the communion plate which is still in use in the parish. After the retirement of Mr. Evans, Christ Church was served by Talbot and others, until the arrival from England, in 1719, of John Vicary, who came out by appointment of Dr. Robinson, then Bishop of London. The feeble health of the new minister soon ended in his death, and then came the Rev. John Urnston, once a missionary in North Carolina, with whom the vestry of Christ Church had a difficulty, which led to his dismissal at the close of a year. Mr. Walter (see *Lives of White and Seabury*) was employed for a while until he refused to acknowledge the authority of King George, when he was driven

years of his life, more than three-fourths of that time being spent in foreign lands, as we shall have occasion to mention in another place. When he returned from France in 1785, age and infirmities weighed so heavily upon him, that he was for the most part confined to his house. But we are assured by one of his descendants, that even during this distressing period, although a sufferer from disease, he used to be carried in a sedan chair to Christ Church; and was let out by the bearers at the door of his pew. Surely, at such an age, with more than one foot already in the grave, no man could be accused of selfish and unworthy mo-

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from the British territories. The Rev. Archibald Cummings was appointed minister of Christ Church in 1726, by Bishop Gibson of London, and held his office for above fourteen years. The only drawback to the general acceptance which attended his ministry, was a misunderstanding between him and Richard Peters, an assistant minister. Peters resigned, but remained in Philadelphia, doing good service for the Church, until after the death of Dr. Jenney, the successor of Cummings. He was chosen by the vestry to the rectorship of the united parishes of Christ Church and St. Peters; this was in 1762. Dr. Peters continued to occupy this position until 1775, when age and infirmities led him to resign. He was succeeded by the Rev. Jacob Duché, famous for having offered the first prayer in Congress. For the history of the parish from this point, we refer our readers to Dr. Dorr's History, and to the "Life of Bishop White," in this series.

tives in attempting to discharge his religious duties. But we are running far in advance of the true order of events, and must hasten to return.

Although so actively engaged in business, Franklin found time, after his twenty-seventh year, to make himself a pretty good French and Italian scholar; and he followed this up with Spanish, and a review of the Latin, of which he had learned the rudiments in his boyhood.

After an absence of ten years he returned to Boston once more, to visit his relations, and, on his way back to Philadelphia, called at Newport to see his brother James. All former differences were forgotten, and their meeting was cordial and affectionate.

James was in feeble health, and he requested his brother, in case of his death, which seemed near at hand, that he would take home his son, a lad of ten years, and bring him up as a printer. This was accordingly done, and when the young man had learned the trade, his uncle set him up in business, thus making ample amends to James for having run off from him before the end of his apprenticeship.

In 1736, Franklin was chosen clerk of the

General Assembly, which secured for him the printing of the votes, laws, paper-money, and other profitable jobs for the public. The following year Colonel Spotswood, late governor of Virginia, and then postmaster-general, being dissatisfied with the conduct of his deputy at Philadelphia, offered the position to the thriving printer. Franklin accepted it, and although the salary was small, it afforded other advantages which well repaid him for the additional labor. The following advertisement indicates nearly the time when he assumed the duties of postmaster :

*“October 27th, 1737. — Notice is hereby given, that the post-office of Philadelphia is now kept at B. Franklin’s, in Market-street; and that Henry Pratt is appointed Riding-master for all the stages between Philadelphia and Newport in Virginia, who sets out about the beginning of each month, and returns in twenty-four days; by whom gentlemen, merchants, and others, may have their letters carefully conveyed, and business faithfully transacted, he having given good security for the same to the Honorable Colonel Spotswood, Postmaster-general of all his Majesty’s dominions in America.”*

Six years afterwards some improvement had taken place in the transmission of the mail. In an advertisement dated April 14th, 1743, he says, "After this week, the northern post will set out for New York on Thursdays at three o'clock in the afternoon till Christmas. The southern post sets out next Monday at eight o'clock for Annapolis, and continues going every fortnight during the summer season." In winter, the post between Philadelphia and New York, went once a fortnight.

The following characteristic advertisement is contained in the *Pennsylvania Gazette* for June 23, 1737. "Taken out of a pew in the Church, some months since, a Common Prayer Book, bound in red gilt, and lettered D. F. (Deborah Franklin) on each cover. The person who took it is desired to open it and read the eighth Commandment, and afterwards return it into the same pew again; upon which no further notice will be taken."



## CHAPTER SEVENTH.

Whitefield visits Philadelphia—The short-sighted policy of that age of spiritual lethargy—Effects of Whitefield's eloquence—His orphan house—Franklin's intercourse with him—"Thee seems to be out of thy right senses"—Preaching to vast multitudes—Testing the powers of Whitefield's voice—Advantage enjoyed by itinerant preachers—Franklin publishes Whitefield's works—Their last meeting—Interesting letter—Motives with which benefits should be conferred—Faith and good works—Example of our blessed Lord.

IN 1739, the Rev. George Whitefield, that eccentric Episcopal clergyman whose name is so familiar to every one, arrived in Philadelphia from Ireland. Had he lived in our time, the Church would gladly have availed herself of his burning eloquence and untiring zeal, to carry the standard of the Cross through the length and breadth of the land; but, unfortunately, it was a season of inactivity and spiritual lethargy, and the devoted man was treated with neglect by those who should have welcomed and encouraged him in his work.

Whitefield was shut out from the churches, and obliged to preach under the open canopy of heaven. This very opposition, however,

only increased his popularity, and thousands flocked to hear the words of salvation from his lips. Franklin became one of his warmest admirers, and often entertained him as a guest.

The effect of Whitefield's preaching was wonderful, and religion seemed to become the one absorbing subject with the people. During his sojourn in Philadelphia, a person could hardly walk along the streets, in an evening, without hearing the sound of sacred melody bursting forth from houses at every step.

The establishment of an Orphan House in Georgia, was at this time the preacher's favorite project. Franklin differed with him as to the best mode of erecting the necessary buildings, and, in consequence of his advice being neglected, he declined contributing towards the object. The honest printer thus describes the way in which his determination was changed:

"I happened soon after, to attend one of his sermons, in the course of which I perceived he intended to finish with a collection, and I silently resolved he should get nothing from me. I had in my pocket a handful of copper money, three or four silver dollars, and five

pistoles in gold. As he proceeded, I began to soften, and concluded to give the copper. Another stroke of his oratory made me ashamed of that, and determined me to give the silver; and he finished so admirably, that I emptied my pocket wholly into the collector's dish, gold and all. At this sermon there was also one of our club, who, being of my sentiments respecting the building in Georgia, and suspecting a collection might be intended, had by precaution emptied his pockets before he came from home. Towards the conclusion of the discourse, however, he felt a strong inclination to give, and applied to a neighbor who stood near him, to lend him some money for the purpose. The request was fortunately made to perhaps the only man in the company who had the firmness not to be affected by the preacher. His answer was, 'At any other time, friend Hopkinson, I would lend to thee freely; but not now, for thee seems to be out of thy right senses.'"

We must give one more passage from Franklin's autobiography, in regard to Whitefield's eloquence:

"He had a loud and clear voice, and articulated his words so perfectly, that he might be

heard and understood at a great distance ; especially as his auditors observed the most perfect silence. He preached one evening from the top of the court-house steps, which are in the middle of Market-street, and on the west side of Second-street, which crosses it at right angles. Both streets were filled with his hearers to a considerable distance. Being among the hindmost in Market-street, I had the curiosity to learn how far he could be heard, by retiring backwards down the street towards the river, and I found his voice distinct till I came near Front-street, when some noise in that street obscured it. Imagining then a semicircle, of which my distance should be the radius, and that it was filled with auditors, to each of whom I allowed two square feet, I computed that he might well be heard by more than thirty thousand. This reconciled me to the newspaper accounts of his having preached to twenty-five thousand people in the fields, and to the history of generals haranguing whole armies, of which I had sometimes doubted.

“By hearing him often, I came to distinguish easily between sermons newly composed, and those which he had often preached in the

course of his travels. His delivery of the latter was so improved by frequent repetition, that every accent, every emphasis, every modulation of voice, was so perfectly well turned and well placed, that, without being interested in the subject, one could not help being pleased with the discourse; a pleasure of much the same kind with that received from an excellent piece of music. This is an advantage itinerant preachers have over those who are stationary, as the latter cannot well improve their delivery of a sermon by so many rehearsals."

Franklin was the first publisher of Whitefield's writings, which were issued in May, 1740. They always remained devoted friends. The last time they met was in London, in 1766. Whitefield died at Newburyport, Massachusetts, four years afterwards. His friend outlived him twenty years. We shall be pardoned for inserting an interesting letter from the philosopher to the eloquent divine:

PHILADELPHIA, June 6, 1753.

SIR:—I received your kind letter of the 2d instant, and am glad to hear that you increase in strength; I hope you will continue mending, till you recover your former health and firm-

ness. Let me know whether you still use the cold bath, and what effect it has.

As to the kindness you mention, I wish it could have been of more service to you. But if it had, the only thanks I should desire is, that you would always be equally ready to serve any other person that may need your assistance, and so let good offices go round; for mankind are all of a family.

For my own part, when I am employed in serving others, I do not look upon myself as conferring favors, but as paying debts. In my travels, and since my settlement, I have received much kindness from men, to whom I shall never have any opportunity of making the least direct return; and numberless mercies from God, who is infinitely above being benefited by our services. Those kindnesses from men, I can therefore only return on their fellow-men; and I can only show my gratitude for these mercies from God, by a readiness to help his other children and my brethren. For I do not think that thanks and compliments, though repeated weekly, can discharge our real obligations to each other, and much less those to our Creator. You will see in this my notion of good works, that I am far from expecting to

merit heaven by them. By heaven we understand a state of happiness, infinite in degree, and eternal in duration. I can do nothing to deserve such rewards. He that, for giving a draught of water to a thirsty person, should expect to be paid with a good plantation, would be modest in his demands, compared with those who think they deserve heaven for the little good they do on earth. Even the mixed, imperfect pleasures we enjoy in this world, are rather from God's goodness than our merit: how much more such happiness of heaven! For my part, I have not the vanity to think I deserve it, the folly to expect it, nor the ambition to desire it; but content myself in submitting to the will and disposal of that God who made me, who has hitherto preserved and blessed me, and in whose fatherly goodness I may well confide, that he will never make me miserable; and that even the afflictions I may at any time suffer shall tend to my benefit.

The faith you mention has certainly its use in the world. I do not desire to see it diminished, nor would I endeavor to lessen it in any man. But I wish it were more productive of good works than I have generally seen it; I

mean real good works; works of kindness, charity, mercy, and public spirit, not holiday-keeping, sermon-reading or hearing; performing church ceremonies, or making long prayers, filled with flatteries and compliments, despised even by wise men, and much less capable of pleasing the Deity. The worship of God is a duty; the hearing and reading of sermons may be useful; but if men rest in hearing and praying, as too many do, it is as if a tree should value itself on being watered and putting forth leaves, though it never produced any fruit.

Your great Master thought much less of these outward appearances and professions than many of his modern disciples. He preferred the *doers* of the word to the mere *hearers*; the son that seemingly refused to obey his father, and yet performed his commands; to him that professed his readiness, but neglected the work; the heretical but charitable Samaritan, to the uncharitable though orthodox priest and sanctified Levite; and those who gave food to the hungry, drink to the thirsty, raiment to the naked, entertainment to the stranger, and relief to the sick, though they never heard of his name, he declares shall in the last day be accepted; when those who cry



Lord ! Lord ! who value themselves upon their faith, though great enough to perform miracles, but have neglected good works, shall be rejected. He professed that he came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance ; which implied his modest opinion, that there were some in his time so good, that they need not hear even him for improvement ; but now-a-days we have scarce a little parson, that does not think it the duty of every man within his reach, to sit under his petty ministrations ; and that whoever omits them offends God.

I wish to such more humility, and to you health and happiness, being your friend and servant,

B. FRANKLIN.

## CHAPTER EIGHTH.

Prosperity—Franklin's efforts for the public good—Militia system—Education—Public fast-day—The Franklin stove—Philosophical studies begun—Dragged into the public service again—Establishment of the Pennsylvania Hospital—Improving the streets of Philadelphia—Changes in the general post-office department—Honors conferred—Curious experiments in electricity—Phenomena of thunder-gusts—Franklin's discoveries carry his name to other lands.

WE have now followed Franklin's fortunes to his fortieth year. Business had gone on prosperously with him, and he had experienced the truth of the observation, that after getting the first hundred pounds, it is more easy to obtain the second. Money itself being of a prolific nature.

Upon the whole, he was well satisfied that he had established himself in Pennsylvania, but there were some things in the province which he regretted, and sought to remedy.

These were the neglect of education, and the want of any militia system,—or other adequate means of defence.

There must always be a leading spirit to in-

augurate reformatations and improvements,— and such was the position which Franklin occupied. As Great Britain and Spain were then at war, and the latter had secured the aid of France, the English colonies in North America were in an exposed condition.

Governor Thomas had done his best to persuade the Quaker Assembly to pass a militia law for the better protection of Pennsylvania, but no steps were taken in the matter. Franklin now wrote a pamphlet, entitled "Plain Truth," setting forth the importance of the measures, and promising in a few days to propose an instrument of association, for the signatures of those who were willing to unite for the common defence. A large public meeting was held, which Franklin addressed\* with so much ability and earnestness, that twelve hundred names were obtained before its adjournment; and other copies of the document being scattered through the country, the num-

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\* Mr. Jefferson said, that he had been in deliberative bodies with General Washington and Dr. Franklin, and that he had never heard either of them make a speech more than fifteen minutes long, and then always directly to the point. He adds, that there were no members who possessed more influence, or who were listened to with more profound attention.

ber soon amounted to more than ten thousand. All these furnished themselves with arms, organized companies, elected officers, and met every week to be instructed in military discipline. The women presented the regiments with handsome silk colors, the devices and mottoes for which our indefatigable printer supplied. The Philadelphia companies chose him for their colonel, but he modestly declined, and recommended Mr. Lawrence for the station, who was appointed accordingly.

Franklin next proposed that a battery should be erected below the town, which was speedily done. His activity in these operations so gratified the governor and council, that they consulted with him on all important occasions. He recommended that a public fast-day should be appointed, and the blessing of Heaven devoutly invoked. This was something unheard of before in Pennsylvania, and the proposal was immediately adopted, Franklin drawing up the proclamation, which was published in English and German, and circulated throughout the province.

It was supposed by some that his activity in these affairs would give such offence to the peace-loving Quakers, that they might defeat

his election to the clerkship of the General Assembly, in which body they formed a large majority. But these apprehensions proved to be ill-founded, and it appeared that while the Friends were opposed from principle to *offensive* war, they were decidedly in favor of the *defensive*.

To show the versatility of Franklin's mind, we should mention that in 1741 he established the *General Magazine and Historical Chronicle*, and in the following year invented the stove which still bears his name.\* For the latter he refused a patent, on the principle that such discoveries ought to be made subservient to the common good of mankind. Peace having been concluded, his thoughts were turned again to the cause of education, and by patient effort he finally succeeded in the establishment of an academy, which grew, in course of time, into the University of Pennsylvania.

In 1748, he threw off many of the cares and vexations of business, by taking into partnership Mr. David Hall, an industrious and hon-

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\* A description of this wood-saving invention is given in the *Encyclopædia Americana*, vol. v., p. 126.

est man, who had been working for him several years, thus securing time, as he fondly hoped, for the prosecution of philosophical studies. With this view he had purchased quite an extensive apparatus, and began a series of interesting experiments.

He had, however, shown himself too useful to the public to be allowed to continue long in retirement, and he was soon appointed justice of the peace, and then alderman, and next a member of the General Assembly. His election to the last post of honor was continued every year for ten years, without his ever soliciting a vote, or expressing any desire for the office.

On taking his seat in the *House*, he was soon appointed clerk.

In 1750, when a treaty was to be held with the Indians at Carlisle, Franklin and Mr. Norris were appointed commissioners to go and attend to the business. Indeed, it is curious to observe what a wonderful influence the successful printer had secured, and how all parties looked to him for assistance or advice. The following year, when Dr. Thomas Bond, a benevolent and excellent man, conceived the idea of establishing a hospital in Philadelphia

for the benefit of poor sick persons, the proposal was so much of a novelty in America, that at first he met with little encouragement. On all sides, he was asked by those whom he solicited to subscribe, "Have you consulted Franklin on this business? And what does he think of it?"

He accordingly laid his plans before Franklin, who warmly approved of them; subscribed liberally himself; wrote several newspaper articles on the subject; induced the Assembly to aid the undertaking by an appropriation of money; and did not cease to exert himself until the institution was firmly established. Years afterwards, while sojourning in Europe, if he gleaned any useful hints, he was sure to communicate them to the managers of the Pennsylvania Hospital.

Dr. Franklin thus describes his successful efforts to improve the condition of the streets of Philadelphia: "Our city, though laid out with a beautiful regularity, the streets large, straight, and crossing each other at right angles, had the disgrace of suffering those streets to remain long unpaved, and in wet weather the wheels of heavy carriages ploughed them into a quagmire, so that it was difficult to cross

them ; and in dry weather the dust was offensive. I had lived near what was called the Jersey Market, and saw with pain the inhabitants wading in mud, while purchasing their provisions. A strip of ground down the middle of that market was at length paved with brick, so that, being once in the market, they had firm footing ; but were often over shoes in dirt to get there. By talking and writing on the subject, I was at length instrumental in getting the street paved with stone between the market and the brick foot-pavement, that was on the side next to the houses. This, for some time, gave an easy access to the market dry-shod ; but, the rest of the street not being paved, whenever a carriage came out of the mud upon this pavement, it shook off and left its dirt upon it, and it was soon covered with mire, which was not removed, the city as yet having no scavengers.

“ After some inquiry, I found a poor, industrious man, who was willing to undertake keeping the pavement clean, by sweeping it twice a week, carrying off the dirt from before all the neighbors’ doors, for the sum of sixpence per month, to be paid by each house. I then wrote and printed a paper, setting forth the advan-



tages to the neighborhood that might be obtained from this small expense; the greater ease in keeping our houses clean, so much dirt not being brought in by people's feet; the benefit to the shops by more custom, as buyers could more easily get at them; and by not having in windy weather the dust blown in upon their goods, &c., &c. I sent one of these papers to each house, and in a day or two went round to see who would subscribe an agreement to pay these sixpences; it was unanimously signed, and for a time well executed. All the inhabitants of the city were delighted with the cleanliness of the pavement that surrounded the market, it being a convenience to all, and this raised a general desire to have all the streets paved; and made the people more willing to submit to a tax for that purpose."

After this, Franklin drew up a bill for paving the city, and brought it into the General Assembly. This was passed, with some modification, during his absence from the country, in 1757.

Upon the death of the postmaster-general of America, in 1753, Benjamin Franklin and William Hunter were appointed by the British government to succeed him in the important duties

of this office. Hitherto, the American post-office had never paid any thing to that of the mother country. The new agents were to have six hundred pounds a year between them, if that sum could be made out of the office. In order to do this, some changes were needed, and great skill in the management of its affairs was indispensable to insure its success; but like every thing else which Franklin undertook, the postal arrangement proved to be quite satisfactory. The business of the office obliged him to make a journey to New England, during the year 1753, when Cambridge and Yale colleges, both of their own accord, conferred upon him the honorary degree of Master of Arts. This was done in consideration of his improvements and discoveries in the electric branch of natural philosophy. These discoveries are entitled to a more particular notice.

Being at Boston in 1746, he met with Dr. Spence, then lately arrived from Scotland, whom he saw perform some curious experiments. This stimulated him to attempt others for himself, and he communicated the result of his observations to Mr. Collinson, of London, a member of the Royal Society. "In the year 1749, he first suggested his idea of explaining

the phenomena of thunder-gusts, and of the *aurora borealis*, upon electrical principles. He points out many particulars in which lightning and electricity agree; and he adduces many facts, and reasonings from facts, in support of his positions.

“In the same year he conceived the astonishingly bold and grand idea of ascertaining the truth of his doctrine by actually drawing down the lightning, by means of sharp-pointed iron rods, raised into the region of the clouds. Even in this uncertain state, his passion to be useful to mankind displayed itself in a powerful manner. Admitting the identity of electricity and lightning, and knowing the power of points in repelling bodies charged with electricity, and in conducting their fire silently and imperceptibly, he suggested the idea of securing houses, ships, &c., from being damaged by lightning, by erecting pointed rods, that should rise some feet above the most elevated part, and descend some feet into the ground or the water. The effect of these, he concluded, would be either to prevent a stroke by repelling the cloud beyond the striking distance, or by drawing off the electrical fire which it contained: or if they could not effect this, they would at least con-

duct the electric matter to the earth, without any injury to the building. It was not until the summer of 1752, that he was enabled to complete his grand and unparalleled discovery by experiment. The plan which he had originally proposed, was to erect, on some high tower or other elevated place, a sentry-box, from which should rise a pointed iron rod, insulated by being fixed in a cake of resin. Electrified clouds passing over this, would, he conceived, impart to it a portion of their electricity, which would be rendered evident to the senses by sparks being emitted, when a key, the knuckle, or other conductor was presented to it.

“Philadelphia at this time afforded no opportunity of trying an experiment of this kind. While Franklin was waiting for the erection of a spire, it occurred to him that he might have more ready access to the region of clouds by means of a common kite. He prepared one by fastening two cross sticks to a silk handkerchief, which would not suffer so much from the rain as paper. To the upright stick was affixed an iron point. The string was, as usual, of hemp, except the lower end, which was silk. Where the hempen string terminated, a key

was fastened. With this apparatus, on the appearance of a thunder-gust approaching, he went out into the commons, accompanied by his son; to whom alone he communicated his intentions, well knowing the ridicule which, too generally for the interest of science, awaits unsuccessful experiments in philosophy. He placed himself under a shed, to avoid the rain; his kite was raised, a thunder-cloud passed over it, no sign of electricity appeared. He almost despaired of success, when suddenly he observed the loose fibres of his string to move towards an erect position. He now presented his knuckle to the key, and received a strong spark. How exquisite must his sensations have been at this moment! On this experiment depended the fate of his theory. If he succeeded, his name would rank high among those who had improved science; if he failed, he must inevitably be subjected to the derision of mankind, or, what is worse, their pity, as a well-meaning man, but a weak, silly projector.

“The anxiety, with which he looked for the result of his experiment, may be easily conceived. Doubts and despair had begun to prevail, when the fact was ascertained, in so clear a manner, that even the most incredulous

could no longer withhold their assent. Repeated sparks were drawn from the key, a vial was charged, a shock given, and all the experiments made which are usually performed with electricity. About a month before this period, some ingenious Frenchman had completed the discovery in the manner originally proposed by Dr. Franklin.

“The letters which he sent to Mr. Collinson, it is said, were refused a place in the Transactions of the Royal Society of London. However this may be, Collinson published them in a separate volume, under the title of ‘New Experiments and Observations on Electricity, made at Philadelphia, in America.’ They were read with avidity, and soon translated into different languages. A very incorrect French translation fell into the hands of the celebrated Buffon, who, notwithstanding the disadvantages under which the work labored, was much pleased with it, and repeated the experiments with success. He prevailed on his friend, M. Dalibard, to give his countrymen a more correct translation of the works of the American electrician. This contributed much towards spreading a knowledge of Franklin’s principles in France.

“The king, Louis the Fifteenth, hearing of these experiments, expressed a wish to be a spectator of them. A course of experiments was given at the seat of the Duc d’Ayen, at St. Germain, by M. de Lor. The applauses which the king bestowed upon Franklin, excited in Buffon, Dalibard, and De Lor, an earnest desire of ascertaining the truth of his theory of thunder-gusts. Buffon erected his apparatus on the tower of Montbur, M. Dalibard at Marly-la-ville, and De Lor at his house in the Estrapade at Paris, some of the highest ground in that capital. Dalibard’s machine first showed signs of electricity. On the 10th of May, 1752, a thunder-cloud passed over it in the absence of M. Dalibard, and a number of sparks were drawn from it by Coiffier, a joiner, with whom Dalibard had left directions how to proceed, and by M. Ranlet, the prior of Marly-la-ville. An account of this experiment was given to the Royal Academy of Sciences, by M. Dalibard, in a memoir dated May 13, 1752.

“On the 18th of May, M. de Lor proved equally successful with the apparatus erected at his own house. These philosophers soon excited those of other parts of Europe to repeat

the experiment; among whom, none signalized themselves more than Father Beccaria of Turin, to whose observations, science is much indebted. Even the cold regions of Russia were penetrated by the ardor for discovery. Professor Richmann had fair to add much to the stock of knowledge on this subject, when an unfortunate flash from his conductor put a period to his existence. The friends of science will long remember with regret, the amiable martyr to electricity.

“By these experiments, Franklin’s theory was established in the most convincing manner. When the truth of it could no longer be doubted, envy and vanity endeavored to detract from its merit. That an American, an inhabitant of the obscure city of Philadelphia, the name of which was hardly known, should be able to make discoveries and to frame theories which had escaped the notice of the enlightened philosophers of Europe, was too mortifying to be admitted. He must certainly have taken the idea from some one else. An American, a being of an inferior order, make discoveries? Impossible! It was said that the Abbé Nollet, 1748, had suggested the idea of the similarity of lightning and electrici-



ty in his 'Leçons de Physique.' It is true that the abbé mentions the idea; but he throws it out as a bare conjecture, and proposes no mode of ascertaining the truth of it. He himself acknowledges that Franklin first entertained the bold thought of bringing lightning from the heavens by means of pointed rods fixed in the air.

"The similarity of lightning and electricity is so strong, that we need not be surprised at notice being taken of it, as soon as electrical phenomena became familiar. We find it mentioned by Dr. Wull and Mr. Grey, while the science was in its infancy. But the honor of forming a regular theory of thunder-gusts, of suggesting a mode of determining the truth of it by experiments, and of putting these experiments in practice, and thus establishing the theory upon a firm and solid basis, is incontestably due to Franklin. Dalibard, who made the first experiments in France, says that he only followed the track which Franklin had pointed out."\*

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\* Franklin's Works, vol. v., p. 174, etc., from an account drawn up by Dr. Stube.

## CHAPTER NINTH.

A general Congress at Albany—Franklin's plan for union—The British government disapprove of it—General Braddock sent over—His embarrassments relieved by Franklin's energy—The unsuccessful expedition—Braddock's poor opinion of the American troops—Franklin's militia bill—Proceeds to the frontier to erect fortifications—The way to secure a prompt attendance at prayers—Chosen colonel—Difficulties with the Proprietaries—Franklin sent to England as the agent of the Province—His reception there—Made doctor of laws—Two anonymous publications, which produced their intended effect—Visit to Holland and Flanders—The armonica—Return to America.

**I**N 1754, war with France being again apprehended, it was determined to call a general Congress at Albany, to arrange a common plan of defence; Franklin being appointed one of the deputies. A conference was there to be held with the chiefs of the Six Nations, concerning the best means of protecting their country and the white settlements from the assaults of the enemy. On his route, Franklin drew up a plan for the union of all the Colonies under one government, so far as might be necessary for defence, and other important purposes. It proposed that the general government

should be administered by a president appointed by the crown, and a grand council, chosen by the provincial assemblies, the council being authorized to levy taxes for all common exigencies. This plan, though unanimously sanctioned by the Congress, was rejected by the Board of Trade, as being too *democratic* in its tendencies, and by the Assemblies, as having too much of prerogative in it.

Franklin was always of the opinion that England and her Colonies would both have been the gainers, had this scheme been adopted.

The British government deeming it inexpedient to permit the union which had been discussed at Albany, lest the Americans might become too military and independent, sent over General Braddock with two regiments of soldiers, to aid them in the war with the French.

This proud, headstrong officer, landed at Alexandria, in Virginia; and thence proceeded to Fredericktown, Maryland, where he halted for carriages. "Our Assembly apprehending," says Franklin, "from some information that he had received, violent prejudices against them, as averse to the service, wished

me to wait upon him, not as from them, but as postmaster-general, under the guise of proposing to settle with him the mode of conducting with most celerity and certainty the despatches between him and the governors of the several provinces, with whom he must necessarily have continual correspondence; and of which they proposed to pay the expense. My son accompanied me on this journey.

“We found the general at Fredericktown, waiting impatiently for the return of those he had sent through the back parts of Maryland and Virginia to collect wagons. I stayed with him several days, dined with him daily, and had full opportunities of removing his prejudices, by the information of what the Assembly had before his arrival actually done, and were still willing to do, to facilitate his operations. When I was about to depart, the returns of wagons to be obtained were brought in, by which it appeared that they amounted only to twenty-five, and not all of those were in serviceable condition. The general and all the officers were surprised, declared the expedition was then at an end, being impossible; and exclaimed against the ministers for igno-

rantly sending them into a country destitute of the means of conveying their stores, baggage, &c., not less than one hundred and fifty wagons being necessary.

“I happened to say, I thought it was a pity they had not been landed in Pennsylvania, as in that country almost every farmer had his wagon. The general eagerly laid hold of my words, and said, ‘Then you, sir, who are a man of interest there, can probably procure them for us; and I beg you will undertake it.’ I asked what terms were to be offered the owners of the wagons; and I was desired to put on paper the terms that appeared to me necessary. This I did, and they were agreed to, and a commission and instructions accordingly prepared immediately.”

Franklin immediately advertised for a supply of wagons and horses, and in the course of two weeks one hundred and fifty wagons, with two hundred and fifty-nine carrying-horses were on their way to the camp. The owners demanded security, in case any wagons or horses should be lost, and when General Braddock’s word was pledged for this purpose, they refused to receive it, not knowing what dependence to place in it. They, how-

ever, took Franklin's bond without the least hesitation. The general was highly gratified with his conduct, and thanked him repeatedly for his prompt assistance, which was put in requisition still further, in the way of furnishing supplies of money and provisions.

Some idea of the character of the unfortunate English officer may be gathered from a little incident which Franklin has recorded—

“In conversation with him, one day, he was giving me some account of his intended progress. ‘After taking Fort Duquesne,’ said he, ‘I am to proceed to Niagara; and, having taken that, to Frontenac, if the season will allow time, and I suppose it will; for Duquesne can hardly detain me above three or four days; and then I see nothing that can obstruct my march to Niagara.’ Having before revolved in my mind the long line his army must make in their march by a very narrow road, to be cut for them through the woods and bushes, and also what I had read of a former defeat of fifteen hundred French, who invaded the Illinois country, I had conceived some doubts and some fears for the event of the campaign. But I ventured only to say, ‘To be sure, sir, if you arrive well

before Duquesne, with these fine troops, so well provided with artillery, the fort, though completely fortified, and assisted with a very strong garrison, can probably make but a short resistance. The only danger I apprehend of obstruction to your march is from the ambuscades of the Indians, who, by constant practice, are dexterous in laying and executing them; and the slender line, near four miles long, which your army must make, may expose it to be attacked by surprise in its flanks, and to be cut like a thread into several pieces, which, from their distance, cannot come up in time to support each other.'

"He smiled at my ignorance, and replied— 'These savages may indeed be a formidable enemy to your raw American militia; but upon the king's regular and disciplined troops, sir, it is impossible they should make any impression.' I was conscious of an impropriety in my disputing with a military man in matters of his profession, and said no more."

It will be needless here to dwell upon the particulars of Braddock's unfortunate expedition and inglorious defeat. Irving's "Life of Washington" furnishes a full and authentic description of it (vol. ii., p. 468).

After Braddock's defeat, Franklin introduced a bill into the Assembly of Pennsylvania for establishing a volunteer militia, and having received a commission as commander, he soon raised a corps of five hundred and sixty men. His son, who had seen some service in the previous war, was now of great assistance in helping to bring this little army into something like order.

The northwestern frontier, which had been sorely infested by the enemy, was the quarter whence danger was most apprehended, and the governor prevailed upon Franklin to proceed thither, and build a line of forts for the protection of the inhabitants.

The Indians had recently burned Gnadenhutten, a village of the Moravians, and murdered the people.

Franklin assembled the companies at Bethlehem, the chief Moravian settlement, and was agreeably surprised to find it in so good a posture of defence. It was in January, 1755, that the important business of fort-building began. The soldiers encamped upon the ground where Gnadenhutten had stood, and a fortification of pine-trees was soon raised,—a poor protection, indeed, against the assaults of



regular troops, but quite sufficient to keep the Indians at bay.

Mr. Beatty, the zealous Presbyterian chaplain, complained to the commander that the men were very reluctant to attend his prayers and exhortations. As a part of their daily rations, they were entitled to a gill of rum—half in the morning, and the other half at night. Franklin smiled, and said to the mortified chaplain—

“It is perhaps below the dignity of your profession to act as steward of the rum, but if you were only to distribute it out after prayers, you would have them all about you.”

The idea pleased him, and with the assistance of a few hands, he measured out the liquor to the satisfaction of all parties, and never were prayers more generally and punctually attended.

The fort had hardly been finished and stored with provisions, when Franklin received a letter from the governor, informing him that he had called the Assembly, and requesting his attendance, if he could possibly be spared from the camp. Upon reaching Philadelphia, he was gratified to find that his militia system was working admirably,—twelve hundred

men having enlisted, and these, with six brass cannon, made quite a formidable appearance. The officers met and chose Franklin for their colonel. The first time that he reviewed his regiment, the soldiers escorted him back to his house, and insisted on firing some rounds before his door, which shook down and broke several glasses of his electrical apparatus.

"My new honors proved not much less brittle," he pleasantly remarks; "for all our commissions were soon after broken by a repeal of the law in England."\*

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\* Autobiography, Spark's edition, p. 205. This most interesting fragment was written in several portions. "It was first commenced at Twyford, the country residence of the good Bishop of St. Asaph, in 1771, and addressed to his son, the governor of New Jersey, and continued at intervals, till the Revolutionary War occupied the writer's time exclusively. It was again, at the solicitation of his friends, James and Vaughan, resumed at Passy, in 1784, and afterwards continued in America. The history of the several editions of this work is curious. It was first, as was the case with Jefferson's "Notes on Virginia," published in French, translated from the author's manuscript. This version was re-translated into English, and published for the first time in that language in London, in 1793. Oddly enough, in another French edition, which appeared in Paris in 1798, the autobiography was again translated into French from the English version of the foreign language. The work as Franklin wrote it, in his native tongue, was first given to the world in the collection of his writings, by his grandson, William Temple Franklin, in 1817. The translation

It should be borne in mind that Pennsylvania was still a Proprietary government, and the Proprietors claimed to be exonerated from taxes. In consequence of the disputes to which this claim gave rise, Franklin was sent to England by the Assembly, as the agent of the province.

He took his son\* with him, and they landed at Falmouth, after a perilous voyage, in July, 1757. In a letter to his wife, describing the dangers which they had escaped, he observes: "The bell ringing for church, we went thither immediately, and, with hearts full of gratitude, returned sincere thanks to God for the mercies we had received."

Franklin's fame as a philosopher and a political writer had preceded him, and he did not find himself a stranger or without friends in England. His arrival was soon noised abroad on the Continent, and he received congratulatory letters from some of the most distinguished men of the time, expressing admira-

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from the French is still in circulation in this country, notwithstanding the publication of Franklin's original, though the authoritative edition of Sparks has of late set an example which will drive all other copies than the genuine one from the market."—*Duyckinck's Cyclopædia*, vol. i., p. 106.

\* William Franklin, afterwards governor of New Jersey.

tion of his scientific achievements, and respect for his character. But the business which had been intrusted to his hands required his closest attention. His instructions embraced several objects tending to restore Pennsylvania to its former peace and prosperity. The principal one was to complain to the king that the Proprietaries refused to bear their due share of the expenses incurred in providing for the defence of the province.

The Proprietaries at this time, were Thomas and Richard Penn, sons of William Penn, the founder of the colony. Franklin found them in no humor to yield to the complaints of the people, and he felt sure that he should finally be obliged to appeal to the higher tribunals.

The business went on very slowly, and there were many provoking hindrances. To aid the cause of his constituents, he published, in 1759, an able work entitled the "Historical Review," in which he traced the political history of Pennsylvania, touching now and then, with considerable severity, upon the acts of William Penn and of his descendants. Although this performance was issued without the author's name, few had any doubts as to the source from which it came. It accom-

plished, quietly and successfully, its important purpose of enlightening the public mind, and of preparing those in office to act with a better understanding of the subject, when the proper time should come.

Franklin while devoting himself mainly to the affairs of his agency, visited various parts of England and Scotland, and made many friends among the most distinguished men of the day. It was by his advice that the expedition against Canada was projected, which ended in the victory of Wolfe at Quebec, and the conquest of that country. He was made a *Doctor of Laws* by the universities of Edinburgh and Oxford.

After a delay of almost three years, Franklin succeeded in bringing his public business to a close, the case being decided in June, 1760. He had the satisfaction of knowing that his services met with the entire approbation of his constituents.

As the war with France was about to terminate, the question began to be discussed among politicians, as to which of the possessions taken from the enemy, it would be most important for England to retain. The American philosopher seized his ready pen, and prepared

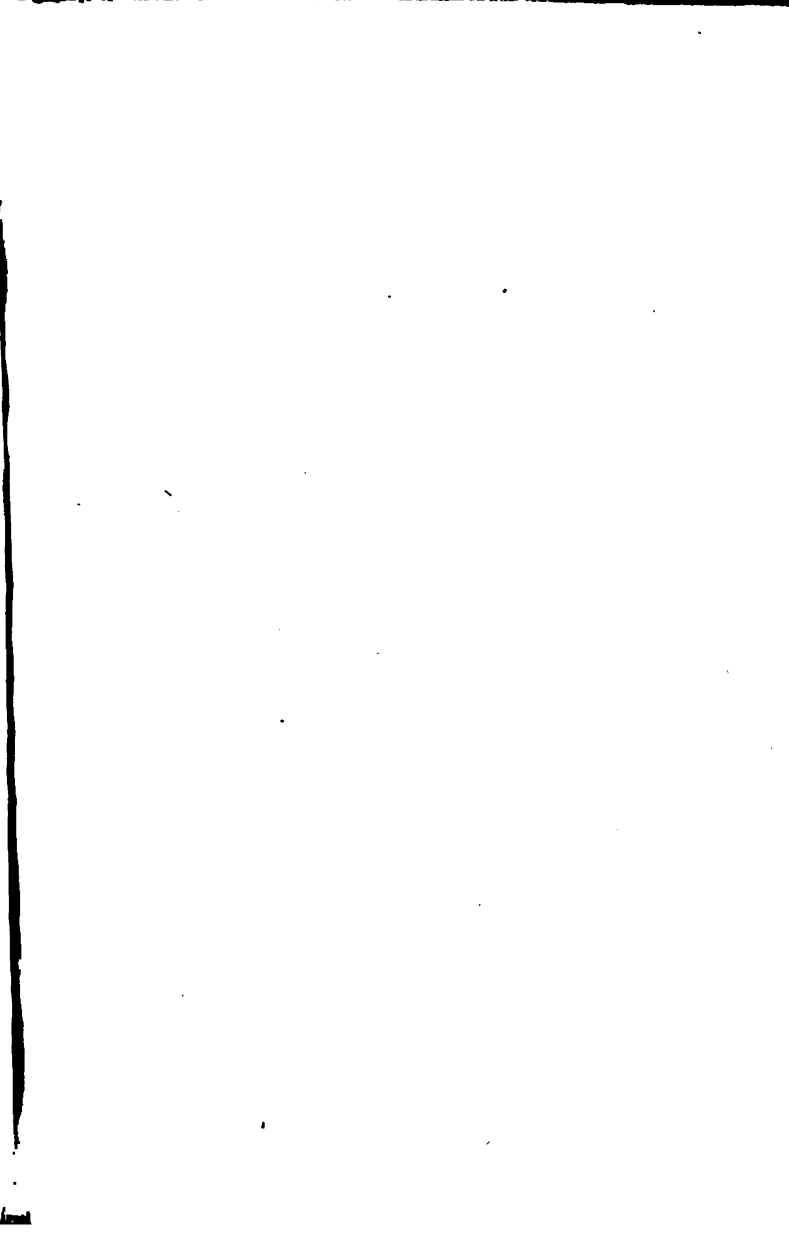
an anonymous tract, "The Interest of Great Britain considered," in which he gave various reasons for keeping Canada. These were so clear and convincing, that they weighed down all opposition. It is a curious fact that Franklin was thus instrumental, in some degree, in adding Canada to the British dominions, which proved to be the first step towards the independence of the Colonies, a result which the same master-mind contributed so much to accomplish.

Crossing the Atlantic was at that day too formidable an undertaking to be thought of very often, and now that he was in England, he determined to make the best use of his time. Accordingly, in 1761, he travelled through Holland and Flanders, returning in season to be present at the coronation of George the Third. His philosophical studies were continued, whenever the opportunity was afforded him.

While staying in London, he saw for the first time, an instrument, consisting of musical glasses, upon which tunes were played by passing a wet finger round their brims. Although charmed with the sweetness of its tones, the instrument appeared to him to be

less perfect than it might be, and after various trials he succeeded in constructing one of a different form, and more commodious. He called it the *Armonica*, in honor of the musical language of the Italians.

At the beginning of 1762, Dr. Franklin began to prepare for his departure to America, although his friends were warmly urging him to send for his family, and to make his home in London. He sailed from Portsmouth towards the close of August, and arrived at Philadelphia on the first of November, after an absence of more than five years. His friends, both political and private, flocked around him to offer their congratulations on the success of his mission, and his safe return.







FRANKLIN AND HIS DAUGHTER SALLIE ON A JOURNEY.  
Front Chap. 10.

## CHAPTER TENTH.

No time for domestic enjoyment—The duties of postmaster-general—Extensive tour of duty—Sarah Franklin—New difficulties—Sensible letter—Value which Franklin attached to the Prayer-book—Once more in England—The Stamp Act, and the troubles which grew out of it—Franklin's efforts to set matters right—Examination before the House of Commons—Becomes more bold and decided—The English ministry once more in mischief—Franklin becomes weary of ineffectual efforts for better things—Hasty departure for America—Death of his wife—Some particulars concerning her.

**A**FTER so long an absence, it would have been grateful to Franklin's feelings to be allowed, for a time at least, to enjoy the quiet and repose of home; but public duties were still pressing upon him, and he was not disposed to neglect them. At each election, while he was in Europe, he had been chosen a member of the Assembly, and he again took his seat in that body, displaying, on every occasion of difficulty or danger, his wonderful resources, and his uncompromising fidelity to the real interests of his country.

Holding the position of postmaster-general in America, five months of the year 1763

were spent in travelling through the northern colonies for the purpose of inspecting the post-offices. The whole extent of his tour was about sixteen hundred miles. He was accompanied by his daughter,\* who rode nearly all

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\* Sarah Franklin was born at Philadelphia, September, 1744. Her father was such an advocate of liberal education, that we may feel sure that her early advantages were very respectable. She married in 1767; her husband, Richard Bache, a Philadelphia merchant, being a native of Yorkshire, England.

The only daughter of Dr. Franklin had been too thoroughly trained in the school of patriotism, to act any but a noble part in the struggle for independence. We find her very busy in providing clothes for the American soldiers during the severe winter of 1780. The Marquis de Chastellux, thus notices a visit he made to her about this time. After detailing the preliminaries of the visit, he goes on: "Mrs. Bache merited all the anxiety we had to see her, for she is the daughter of Mr. Franklin. Simple in her manners like her respected father, she possesses his benevolence. She conducted us into a room filled with work, lately finished by the ladies of Philadelphia. This work consisted neither of embroidered tambour waistcoats, nor of net-work edging, nor of gold and silver brocade. It was a quantity of shirts for the soldiers of Pennsylvania. The ladies bought the linen from their own private purses, and took a pleasure in cutting them out and sewing themselves. On each shirt was the name of the lady who made it, and they amounted to twenty-two hundred."

A letter from M. de Marbois to Dr. Franklin, the succeeding year, thus speaks of his daughter: "If there are in Europe any women who need a model of attachment to domestic duties and love for their country, Mrs. Bache may be pointed out to them as such. She passed a part of the last year in exertions to rouse

the way from Rhode Island to Philadelphia on horseback, while he drove himself in a light carriage.

New difficulties continuing to arise between the province and the Proprietaries, the Assembly at last determined to petition for the establishment of a regal government, and Franklin was again appointed agent, in 1764. Twelve days after receiving this fresh evidence of public confidence, he left Philadelphia (November 7), accompanied by a cavalcade of three hundred citizens, who attended him as far as Chester, where he took ship.

"The affectionate leave taken of me by so many dear friends at Chester," said he, "was

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the zeal of the Pennsylvania ladies, and she made on this occasion such a happy use of the eloquence which you know she possesses, that a large part of the American army was provided with shirts, bought with their money, or made by their hands. In her applications for this purpose, she showed the most indefatigable zeal, the most unwearied perseverance, and a courage in asking, which surpassed even the obstinate reluctance of the Quakers in refusing."

Such were the women of America during the long and fearful struggle which preceded the independence of the United States. Few, indeed, had the talents and opportunities to perform so many benevolent deeds as Mrs. Bache; her patriotism has made her an example for her countrywomen. She died in 1808, aged sixty-four years.

very endearing. God bless them and all Pennsylvania." He sailed the next day, but the vessel was detained over night at Reedy Island, in the Delaware. At that place he wrote a letter to his daughter, from which the following is an extract:

"My dear child, the natural prudence and goodness of heart God has blessed you with, make it less necessary for me to be particular in giving you advice. I shall therefore only say, that the more attentively dutiful and tender you are towards your good mamma, the more you will recommend yourself to me. But why should I mention *me*, when you have so much higher a promise in the commandments, that such conduct will recommend you to the favor of God. You know I have many enemies, all indeed on the public account (for I cannot recollect that I have in a private capacity given just cause of offence to any one whatever), yet they are enemies, and very bitter ones; and you must expect their enmity will extend in some degree to you, so that your slightest indiscretions will be magnified into crimes, in order the more sensibly to wound and afflict me. It is, therefore, the more necessary for you to be extremely cir-

cumspect in all your behavior, that no advantage may be given to their malevolence.

“Go constantly to church, whoever preaches. The act of devotion in the Common Prayer Book is your principal business there, and if properly attended to, will do more towards amending the heart than sermons generally can do; for they were composed by men of much greater piety and wisdom than our common composers of sermons can pretend to be; and therefore I wish you would never miss the prayer days; yet I do not mean you should despise sermons, even of the preachers you dislike; for the discourse is often much better than the man, as sweet and clear waters come through very dirty earth. I am the more particular on this head as you seemed to express, a little before I came away, some inclination to leave our church, which I would not have you do.”

Sarah Franklin was now in her twentieth year, an age when the advice of a father was especially needed; and the judicious hints contained in this letter are worthy the attention of many in our own day. That the philosopher did not undervalue good preaching is clear from the interest which he always felt in

Whitefield's discourses, but at the same time he believed that the Church Service was of more importance than the most able sermon.\*

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\* Dr. Franklin's interest in the Prayer-book appears every now and then, in little incidental-references scattered throughout his extensive correspondence. Thus, in writing to his wife from London, June 10, 1756, he says: "I have ordered two large print Prayer-books to be bound on purpose for you and Goody Smith. So you will both of you be relieved from the use of spectacles in church a little longer."—*Sparks*, vol. vii., p. 170.

Again, under date June 16, 1763: "You spent your Sunday very well, but I think you should go oftener to church."—*Sparks*, vol. vii., p. 254.

It is a curious fact that Dr. Franklin was, to some extent, the father of what we call the *Memorial Movement*—at least, so far as the curtailment of the Church Service is concerned, and its adaptation to circumstances. While we trust that no churchman would be willing to see the book changed to the extent which he proposed, the preface to his work exhibits his views in regard to public worship more fully than they are anywhere else to be found, and so far it is a curiosity. It must also be remembered that it was the English Prayer-book which he had in view, and that many judicious alterations have since been made in our own. Franklin's book is entitled, "Abridgment of the Book of Common Prayer," &c., and was printed in London in 1773. We quote a part of the preface, which is still extant in his own handwriting:

#### "PREFACE.

"The editor of the following abridgment of the Liturgy of the Church of England thinks it but decent and respectful to all, more particularly to the reverend body of clergy who adorn the Protestant Religion by their good works, preaching, and

After a stormy passage of thirty days, Dr. Franklin found himself once more in England. When the news came back to Philadelphia,

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example, that he should humbly offer some reasons for such an undertaking. He addresses himself to the serious and discerning. He professes himself to be a Protestant of the Church of England, and holds in the highest veneration the doctrines of Jesus Christ. He is a sincere lover of social worship, deeply sensible of its usefulness to society; and he aims at doing some service to religion by proposing such abbreviations and omissions in the forms of our Liturgy (retaining every thing he thinks essential) as might, if adopted, procure a more general attendance. For, besides the differing sentiments of many pious and well-disposed persons in some speculative points, who in general have a good opinion of our Church, it has often been observed and complained of that the Morning and Evening Service, as practised in England and elsewhere, are so long, and filled with so many repetitions, that the continued attention suitable to so serious a duty becomes impracticable, the mind wanders, and the fervency of devotion is slackened. Also, the propriety of saying the same prayer more than once in the same service is doubted, as the service is thereby lengthened without apparent necessity—our Lord having given us a short prayer as an example, and censured the heathen for thinking to be heard because of much speaking. Moreover, many pious and devout persons, whose age or infirmities will not suffer them to remain for hours in a cold church, especially in the winter season, are obliged to forego the comfort and edification they would receive by their attendance on divine service. These, by shortening the time, would be relieved; and the younger sort, who have had some principles of religion instilled into them, and who have been educated in a belief of the necessity of adoring their Maker, would probably more frequently, as well as cheerfully, attend divine service, if they were not detained so long at any one time. Also, many well-



his friends celebrated the event by the ringing of bells, and other demonstrations of joy.

Although Franklin had been sent to Eng-

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disposed tradesmen, shopkeepers, artificers, and others, whose habitations are not remote from churches, could and would, more frequently at least, find time to attend divine service on other than Sundays, if the prayers were reduced into a much narrower compass. Formerly there were three services performed, at different times of the day, which three services are now usually joined in one. This may suit the conveniency of the person who officiates, but is too often inconvenient and tiresome to the congregation. If this abridgment, therefore, should ever meet with acceptance, the well-disposed clergy, who are laudably desirous to encourage the *frequency* of divine service, may promote so great and good a purpose by repeating it three times on a Sunday, without so much fatigue to themselves as at present. Suppose at nine o'clock, at eleven, and at one in the evening; and by preaching no more sermons than usual, of a moderate length, and thereby accommodate a greater number of people with convenient hours.

“These were general reasons for wishing and proposing an abridgment. In attempting it, we do not presume to dictate even to a single Christian. We are sensible there is a proper authority in the rulers of the Church for ordering such matters; and whenever the time shall come when it may be thought not unreasonable to revise our Liturgy, there is no doubt but every suitable improvement will be made, under the care and direction of so much learning, wisdom, and piety in one body of men collected. Such a work as this must then be much better executed. In the mean time, this humble performance may serve to show the practicability of shortening the service near one-half, without the omission of what is essentially necessary; and we hope, moreover, that the book may be occasionally of some use to families or private assemblies of Christians.”—*Spark's*, vol. x., p. 207.

land as the special agent for Pennsylvania, circumstances soon led him to take an active part in the affairs of the other colonies. The unjust and unpopular project for taxing the American people had already been announced, and he carried with him a remonstrance of the Provincial Assembly of Pennsylvania against it, which he presented to Mr. Grenville before the passage of the Stamp Act. He resisted the adoption of that measure, and from its passage (1765) to its repeal (1766), spared no pains to prove how unconstitutional and impolitic such an act would be. When the repeal was about to be attempted, it was arranged by his friends that he should be examined on the whole question before the House of Commons. This memorable examination took place on the 3d of February, 1766.

Franklin's dignified bearing, his self-possession, the promptness and propriety with which he replied to every question, the familiar acquaintance which he displayed with political affairs, and the fearlessness with which he defended the course which his countrymen had pursued, all combined to arrest the attention, and call forth the astonishment of those who heard him.

When he was asked, whether the Americans would pay the stamp duty if it were moderated, he answered, "No! never, unless compelled by force of arms." Again, when it was inquired how the Americans would receive another tax, imposed upon the same principles, he said, "Just as they do this; they will never pay." And again, he was asked whether the Americans would rescind their resolutions, if the Stamp Act were repealed. To this he replied, "No, never; they will never do it, unless compelled by force of arms." He was also questioned as to the non-importation agreements, and asked whether the Americans would not soon become tired of them, and fall back to purchasing British manufactures as before. He said he did not believe they would; that he knew his countrymen; that they had materials, and industry to work them up; that they could make their own clothes, and would make them; that they loved liberty, and would maintain their rights. The examination was closed with the two following questions and answers:—"What used to be the pride of the Americans?" He answered, "To indulge in the fashions and manufactures of Great Britain." "What is now their pride?" "To

wear their old clothes over again till they can make new ones."

After a long and exciting debate in Parliament, the Stamp Act was repealed. Still the infatuated ministry must devise some fresh cause of mischief. On the passage of the revenue acts of 1767, Dr. Franklin became still more bold and earnest in his expostulations, and openly predicted in England, that the inevitable result of those and the other similar measures of the ministry would be a general resistance by the colonies, and a separation from the mother country. But he never deviated from his original plan, to make every effort to enlighten the public opinion in England, to arrest the ministry in their infatuation, and to inculcate moderation and patience, as well as constancy and unanimity in America. He endeavored, at the same time, to stand well with the British Government, aware that this was necessary to enable him to serve his country effectually; while he never ceased to proclaim the rights, justify the proceedings, and animate the courage of his countrymen. He was not ignorant, to use his own words, "that this course would render him suspected in England of being too much an American,

and in America of being too much of an Englishman." His transmission of the celebrated letters of Hutchinson and Oliver (1772), which had been placed in his hands, is not the least memorable of his acts at this opening period of the revolution. He immediately avowed his own share in the transaction, although he never divulged the names of the persons from whom he had received them. The indignant petition of the Assembly of Massachusetts, in consequence of these letters, was presented by him to the ministry, and he was immediately made the object of the most virulent abuse, and held up to the hatred and ridicule of the British nation. He met the conflict with no less spirit than wit, as is particularly exemplified in his two satirical pieces, the Prussian Edict, and the Rules for reducing a great Empire to a small one. At the discussion of the petition before the privy council, Franklin was present. Wedderburn (afterwards Lord Loughborough), the solicitor-general, assailed him with the most coarse invective, styling the venerable philosopher, and the official representative of four of the American provinces, a "thief and a murderer," who had "forfeited all the respect of society and of men." The ministry now dis-

missed him from his place of deputy postmaster-general, and a chancery suit was instituted in relation to the letters, for the purpose of preventing him from attempting his own vindication.

Attempts were made, as the difficulties increased, to corrupt the man whom it had been found impossible to intimidate; "any reward, unlimited recompense, honors, and recompense beyond his expectations," were promised him; but he was as inaccessible to corruption as to threats.

It was at this period that he presented the petition of the first American Congress; and he attended behind the bar (Feb. 1, 1775), in the House of Lords, when Chatham proposed his plan of a reconciliation. In the course of the debate, that great man characterized him as "one whom all Europe held in high estimation for his knowledge and wisdom; who was an honor, not to the English nation only, but to human nature."

Franklin was growing extremely weary of his fruitless efforts to arrange the unhappy difficulties which prevailed, and wrote to his son in January, 1772, "I have of late great debates with myself, whether or not I shall con-

tinue here any longer. I grow home-sick, and, being now in my sixty-seventh year, I begin to apprehend some infirmity of age may attack me, and make my return impracticable. I have also some important affairs to settle before my death, a period I ought now to think cannot be far distant. I see here no disposition in Parliament to meddle further in Colony affairs for the present, either to lay more duties or to repeal any ; and I think, though I were to return again, I may be absent from here a year without any prejudice to the business I am engaged in ; though it is not probable that, being once at home, I should ever again see England. I have, indeed, so many good, kind friends here, that I could spend the remainder of my life among them with great pleasure, if it were not for my American connections, and the indelible affection I retain for that country from which I have been so long in a state of exile."

His friends, however, urged him so strongly to delay his departure, hoping that something might yet be accomplished, that he sacrificed his own convenience and comfort, and tarried until he received an intimation that he was about to be arrested as guilty of fomenting re-

bellion in the Colonies. He then quitted England in haste on the 21st of March, 1775, and reached his home on the 5th of May. It was now left unto him desolate, his wife having died in the spring of 1774, when he was diligently making his preparations to return to those whom he loved most dearly upon earth. Mrs. Franklin was attacked with a paralytic stroke which she survived only five days. Her remains were interred in the cemetery of Christ Church, on the side next to Arch-street. They had been married forty-four years, and lived together in uninterrupted harmony and happiness.

Their correspondence during his long absence, a great part of which has been preserved, is affectionate on both sides, exhibiting proofs of an unlimited confidence and devoted attachment. He omitted no opportunity to send her whatever he thought would contribute to her convenience and comfort, accompanied by numerous little tokens of remembrance and affection. So much did he rely on her prudence and capacity, that, when abroad, he intrusted to her the management of his private affairs. Many years after her death, in writing to a young lady, he said, "Frugality is an enrich-



ing virtue; a virtue I never could acquire myself, but I was once lucky enough to find it in my wife, who therefore became a fortune to me." The little song which he wrote in her praise, is marked with a playful tenderness, and contains sentiments creditable to his feelings as a man and a husband. In his autobiography and letters he often mentions his wife, and always with a kindness and respect which could proceed only from genuine sensibility, and a high estimate of her character and virtues.

In a collection of "Letters to Benjamin Franklin from his family and friends" (New York: C. Benjamin Richardson), seven of Mrs. Franklin's epistles to her husband are preserved. Every line breathes less the wife of the statesman than the domestic, good wife. Judging from her portrait, she was a fine, handsome, cheerful-looking woman; and she addresses the doctor as her "dear child," entertaining him with the gossip of the day, and the various little incidents in her domestic affairs.

## CHAPTER ELEVENTH.

The reader is introduced to the Bishop of St. Asaph—Franklin enjoys his generous hospitality—Keeping a grandson's birthday—Chitchat which is not to be repeated—Franklin begins his autobiography—Dr. Shipley's noble stand in regard to American affairs—Humorous letter on the death of Miss Shipley's squirrel—A touching reminiscence—The death of the good bishop—Dr. Franklin's letter of condolence—Earthly friendships brought to a close.

**A**S a pleasing episode after all the stormy scenes through which we have lately passed, we shall introduce our readers to Dr. Shipley, the bishop of St. Asaph, a man distinguished for his virtues, his abilities, and the steady support which he gave to the principles of civil liberty. He was a devoted friend of Dr. Franklin, who, on various occasions, enjoyed the generous hospitalities of his house at Twyford, in Hampshire, the bishop's summer residence. The following letter to Mrs. Franklin, from her devoted husband, will be read with interest.

“LONDON, August 14, 1771.

“MY DEAR CHILD:

“I am glad to hear of all your welfares, and that the pictures were safe arrived. You

do not tell me who mounted the great one, nor where you have hung it up. Let me know whether Dr. Bond likes the new one better than the old one; if so, the old one is to be returned hither to Mr. Wilson, the painter. You may keep the frame, as it may be wanted for some other picture there. I wrote to you a letter the beginning of last month, which was to go by Captain Falconer, and have since been in the country. I am just returned to town, and find him still here, and the letters not gone. He goes, however, next Saturday.

“I had written to many of my friends by him. I spent three weeks in Hampshire, at my friend, the Bishop of St. Asaph’s. The bishop’s lady knows what children and grandchildren I have and their ages; so, when I was to come away on Monday the 12th, in the morning, she insisted on my staying that one day longer, that we might together keep my grandson’s birthday. At dinner, among other nice things, we had a floating island, which they always particularly have on the birthdays of any of their own six children, who were all but one at table, where there was also a clergyman’s widow, now above one hundred years

old. The chief toast of the day was Master Benjamin Bache, which the venerable old lady began in a bumper of *mountain*. The bishop's lady politely added, 'and that he may be as good a man as his grandfather.' I said I hoped he would be *much better*. The bishop, still more complaisant than his lady, said, 'We will compound the matter, and be contented if he should not prove *quite so good*.' This chitchat is to yourself only, in return for some of yours about your grandson, and must only be read to Sally, and not spoken of to anybody else; for you know how people add and alter silly stories that they hear, and make them appear ten times more silly.

"Just while I am writing, the post brings me the inclosed from the good bishop, with some letters of recommendation for Ireland, to see which country I am to set out next week with my old friend and fellow-traveller, Counsellor Jackson. We expect to be absent a month or six weeks. The bishop's youngest daughter, mentioned in his letter, is about thirteen years of age, and came up with me in the post-chaise to go to school."

It is worth noting, that it was during this visit at the Bishop of St. Asaph's, that Frank-

lin began to write the memoirs of his life, in the form of a letter to his son.

Dr. Shipley was decidedly opposed to the coercive measures adopted by the British government against the American colonies, and in a sermon before the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, he expressed his opinions with the greatest boldness. (See Franklin's Works, vol. viii., p. 40.)

Franklin's humorous letter to Miss Georgiana Shipley, one of the bishop's daughters, will afford my young readers some amusement.

Her epistles to the distinguished American prove her to have been a young lady of a highly cultivated mind, lively sensibility, and generous disposition.

Here is the letter just referred to.

LONDON, September 26, 1772.

DEAR MISS :

I lament with you most sincerely the unfortunate end of poor Mungo. Few squirrels were better accomplished ; for he had had a good education, had travelled far, and seen much of the world. As he had the honor of being, for his virtues, your favorite, he should not go, like common skuggs, without an elegy

# KPITAPH.

or an epitaph. Let us give him on  
monumental style and measure, which  
neither prose nor verse, is perhaps the  
best for grief; since to use common  
would look as if we were not affected  
make rhymes would seem trifling in

## EPITAPH.

Alas! poor Mungo!  
Happy wert thou, hadst thou known  
Thy own felicity.  
Remote from the fierce bald eagle,  
Tyrant of thy native woods,  
Thou hadst naught to fear from his piercing  
Nor from the murdering gun  
Of the thoughtless sportsman.  
Safe in thy wired castle,  
Grimalkin never could annoy thee.  
Daily wert thou fed with the choicest viand  
By the fair hand of an indulgent mistress;  
But, discontented,  
Thou wouldst have more freedom.  
Too soon, alas! didst thou obtain it;  
And wandering,  
Thou art fallen by the fangs of wanton, cruel  
Learn hence,  
Ye who blindly seek more liberty,  
Whether subjects, sons, squirrels, or daughters,  
That apparent restraint may be real protection  
Yielding peace and plenty,  
With security.

You see, my dear miss, how much

the life, in  
sed to the  
British gov-  
colonies, and  
or the Propo-  
I his opinions  
See Franklin's

Miss Georgis-  
daughters, will  
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September 26, 1772.

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avorite, he should  
without an elegy

decent and proper this broken style is, than if we were to say, by way of epitaph,

Here Skugg,  
Lies snug,  
As a bug, '  
In a rug.

And yet, perhaps, there are people in the world of so little feeling as to think that this would be a good enough epitaph for poor Mungo.

If you wish it, I shall procure another to succeed him; but perhaps you will now choose some other amusement.

Remember me affectionately to all the good family, and believe me ever your affectionate friend,

B. FRANKLIN.

On Franklin's return home in 1785, after his long sojourn in France, we find the following reference, in one of his letters, to his friend Dr. Shipley and his amiable family :

"I bore my voyage very well, and find myself rather better for it, so that I have every possible reason to be satisfied with my having undertaken and performed it. When I was at Passy, I could not bear a wheel-carriage; and being discouraged in my project of de-

scending the Seine in a boat by the difficulties and tediousness of its navigation in so dry a season, I accepted the offer of one of the king's litters, carried by large mules, which brought me well, though in walking slowly, to Havre. Thence I went over in a packet-boat to Southampton, where I stayed four days, till the ship came for me to Spithead. Several of my London friends came there to see me, particularly the good Bishop of St. Asaph and family, who stayed with me to the last."

But earthly friendship cannot last always. We have sad evidence of this in the communication which follows. The Bishop of St. Asaph died on the 9th of December, 1788.

BOLTON-STREET, 24th December, 1788.

MY DEAR FRIEND:

It is a great while since I wrote to you, and still longer since I heard from you; but I have now a particular pleasure in writing to one who had long known and loved the dear good parent I have lost. You will probably, before you receive this, have heard of my father's death. His illness was short, and terminated in an apoplexy. He was seldom perfectly in his senses for the last four days; but



such constant calmness and composure could only have attended the death-bed of a truly good man. How unlike the ideas I had formed to myself of death, which, till now, I had only seen at a distance, and heard of with terror! The nearer his last moment approached, the more his ideas seemed elevated; and but for those whom living he had loved with tenderness, and dying he still felt interested for, he showed no regret at leaving this world. I believe his many virtues have called down a blessing on his family, for we have all been supported under this severe affliction beyond what I could have imagined; and though sorrow will for a time get the better of every other sensation, I feel now that the strongest impression left by his death is the desire of imitating his virtues in an humbler sphere of life.

My dear mother's health, I hope, will not have suffered materially; and she has every consolation to be derived from the reflection, that, for forty-five years, it was the study of her life to make the best of husbands happy. He, in return, has shown that his attention to *her* ease and comfort did not end with his life. He was happily preserved to us so long as to

be able to leave all his family in good circumstances. I fancy my mother, Bessy, and I shall live at Twyford, but at present no place is settled.

May I flatter myself that you will still feel some affection for the family of your good old friend, and let me have the happiness of hearing it from yourself.

I shall request Dr. Price to send this letter. My mother, brother, and sisters beg to be all most kindly remembered.

Believe me, dear sir, your faithful and obliged  
CATHERINE LOUISA SHIPLEY.

To this touching letter, Dr. Franklin thus replied, and with this we take our leave of the good bishop :

PHILADELPHIA, April 27, 1789.

It is only a few days since the kind letter of my dear young friend, dated December 24, came to my hands. I had before, in the public papers, met with the afflicting news that letter contained. That excellent man has then left us ! His departure is a loss, not to his family and friends only, but to his nation and to the world ; for he was intent on doing good, had wisdom to devise the means, and talents

to promote them. His "Sermon before the Society for Propagating the Gospel," and his "Speech intended to have been spoken," are proofs of his ability as well as his humanity. Had his counsels in those pieces been attended to by the ministers, how much bloodshed might have been prevented, and how much expense and disgrace to the nation avoided!

Your reflections on the constant calmness and composure attending his death are very sensible. Such instances seem to show that the good sometimes enjoy in dying a foretaste of the happy state they are about to enter.

According to the course of years, I should have quitted this world long before him. I shall, however, not be long in following. I am now in my eighty-fourth year, and the last year has considerably enfeebled me, so that I hardly expect to remain another. You will then, my dear friend, consider this as probably the last line to be received from me, and as a taking leave. Present my best and most sincere respects to your good mother, and love to the rest of the family, to whom I wish all happiness, and believe me to be, while I *do* live, yours most affectionately, B. FRANKLIN.

## CHAPTER TWELFTH.

**Dr. Franklin in Congress**—The whole country in agitation on account of the conflict at Lexington—Causes of the American Revolution—Letter to Dr. Priestley—Treacherous conduct of General Gage—A busy old man—Frugality and industry become fashionable—Evidences that our patriotic fathers looked to God for help—Peyton Randolph's funeral—New post-office arrangements—The half-bound folio of three quires of paper—Military affairs—Franklin serves on various important committees—Secret correspondence opened with friends abroad—Commissioners sent to Canada—Very little accomplished.

**T**HE very next day after his arrival in Philadelphia, Dr. Franklin was chosen by the Assembly of Pennsylvania a delegate to the second Continental Congress, which was to meet on the 10th of May, 1775. Tidings of the conflict at Lexington and Concord had thrown the whole country into a state of the greatest agitation,—all classes seized their arms, and the war-cry resounded through the land. The oppressed Colonies were rising up in their majesty to vindicate their rights.\*

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\* When the late President Adams was minister at the Court of St. James, he often saw his countryman, Benjamin West, the late president of the Royal Academy. One day, Mr. West

Franklin thus refers to the state of public affairs, in a letter to Dr. Priestley :

“ Britain has begun to burn our seaport towns ; secure, I suppose, that we shall never be able to return the outrage in kind. She

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asked his friend if he wished to take a walk and see the cause of the American Revolution. The minister smiled at the proposal, and said he should like to accompany his friend West anywhere. The following day he called, according to agreement, and took Mr. Adams into Hyde Park to a spot near Serpentine River, where he gave him the following narrative :

“ The king came to the throne a young man, surrounded by flattering courtiers, one of whose frequent topics it was to declaim against the meanness of his palace, which was wholly unworthy a monarch of such a country as England. They said there was not a sovereign in Europe lodged so poorly ; that his sorry, dingy, old brick palace of St. James looked like a stable, and that he ought to hold a palace suited to his kingdom. The king was fond of architecture, and would therefore readily listen to suggestions, which were in fact all true. The spot that you see here was selected for the site, between this and this point, which were marked out. The king applied to his ministers on the subject. They inquired what sum would be wanted by his majesty, who said that he would begin with a million. They stated the expenses of the war, and the poverty of the treasury, but that his majesty's wishes should be taken into full consideration. Some time afterwards the king was informed that the wants of the treasury were too urgent to admit of a supply from their present means, but that a revenue might be raised in America to supply all the king's wishes. The suggestion was followed up, and the king was in this way first led to consider and then to consent to the scheme of taxing the Colonies.”

may doubtless destroy them all; but if she wishes to recover our commerce, are these the probable means? She must certainly be distracted; for no tradesman out of Bedlam ever thought of increasing the number of his customers by knocking them on the head, or of enabling them to pay their debts by burning their houses. If she wishes to have us subjects, and that we should submit to her as our compound sovereign, she is now giving us such miserable specimens of her government, that we shall ever detest and avoid it, as a complication of robbery, murder, famine, fire, and pestilence.

“You will have heard, before this reaches you, of the treacherous conduct of General Gage to the remaining people in Boston, in detaining their goods, after stipulating to let them go out with their effects, on pretence that merchants’ goods were not effects; the defeat of a great body of his troops by the country people at Lexington; some other small advantages gained in skirmishes with their troops; and the action at Bunker’s Hill, in which they were twice repulsed, and the third time gained a dear victory. Enough has happened, one would think, to convince your min-

isters that the Americans will fight, and that this is a harder nut to crack than they imagined.

“We have not yet applied to any foreign power for assistance, nor offered our commerce for their friendship. Perhaps we never may; yet it is natural to think of it, if we are pressed. We have now an army on the establishment, which still holds yours besieged. My time was never more fully employed. In the morning, at six, I am at the Committee of Safety, appointed by the Assembly to put the province in a state of defence, which committee holds till near nine, when I am at the Congress, and that sits till after four in the afternoon. Both these bodies proceed with the greatest unanimity, and their meetings are well attended. It will scarce be credited in Britain that men can be as diligent with us from zeal for the public good, as with you for thousands per annum. Such is the difference between uncorrupted new states and corrupted old ones.

“Great frugality and great industry are now become fashionable here. Gentlemen who used to entertain with two or three courses, pride themselves now in treating

with simple beef and pudding. By these means, and the stoppage of our consumptive trade with Britain, we shall be better able to pay our voluntary taxes for the support of our troops. Our savings in the article of trade amount to near five millions sterling per annum."

The blood of American freemen had been shed by a wanton exercise of military power, and those who had hitherto been hoping that the difficulties with the mother country might yet be amicably settled, were now convinced that political independence was the only cure for the evils under which the colonies so long had suffered.

We observe with satisfaction that the fathers of the Republic were men who feared God, and who sought for His help and blessing.

In "Passages from the Diary of Christopher Marshall," edited by Mr. William Duane, we find many incidental references which bring this fact conspicuously before us. Thus, under date of May 11, 1775, he notes: "This afternoon the delegates opened the Congress at the State House; began with prayer, in which officiated Jacob Duché."

It will be remembered that this clergyman



had offered the first prayer in Congress, on the 7th of September, 1774, when the appointed services in the Prayer-book proved to be so wonderfully appropriate for the occasion.\*

Again: Mr. Marshall writes in his private journal on the 20th of July: "This being the memorable day in which our unjust and cruel ministry took away all our sea-trade, as far as their inveterate malice could reach, the shops shut, most families attended divine worship. I went to Christ Church, where an excellent sermon was preached on the occasion to a crowded auditory, among whom were, I presume, all the delegates. It was an awful meeting, as numbers of wet eyes demonstrated their attention."

On the 22d of October, Peyton Randolph, the president of Congress, died of apoplexy; and two days afterwards, the same hand makes note that the delegates went to Christ Church, where Mr. Duché preached, and then all followed the remains of the deceased patriot to the grave in the church burial-ground.

Dr. Franklin was one of the ruling minds in

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\* See Lossing's "Field Book of the Revolution," vol. ii., p. 267; and the "Life of Washington," in this series.

Congress, and as early as July, 1775, he had prepared and presented a plan of confederation, which was little else, in fact, than a declaration of independence. This plan was published both in this country and in England, and although it was not acted upon immediately, it served a good purpose afterwards, when the members of Congress were ready to consider the subject.

As the post-office establishment had been effectually broken up by the disorders of the times, a new one was erected, and Dr. Franklin appointed postmaster, with a salary of a thousand dollars per annum.

"In the general post-office at Washington city, I saw, several years ago," writes Mr. Lossing, "Field-Book," vol. i., p. 568, "the book in which Franklin kept his post-office accounts. It is a common, half-bound folio, of three quires of coarse paper, and contained all the entries for nearly two years. The first entry was November 17, 1776. Now more than fifteen hundred of the largest-sized ledgers are required annually for the same purpose; the number of contractors and other persons having accounts with the office being over thirty thousand."

During several months the attention of Congress was principally directed to military affairs, and in the measures proposed for raising and equipping an army. Franklin, now in his sixty-ninth year, manifested all the ardor and activity of youth. He was the chairman of several important committees, and his good sense seemed to be ready for use in every emergency.

After George Washington had received the honorable and responsible appointment of commander-in-chief, Dr. Franklin, Thomas Lynch, and Benjamin Harrison were deputed by Congress to proceed to the camp at Cambridge, and confer with him on the best mode of recruiting and supporting the army. They met at head-quarters, on the 18th of October, where they were joined by delegates from each of the New England governments. The conference lasted several days, and such a system was matured as was satisfactory to General Washington, and as proved effectual in attaining the object.

Some time before, Dr. Franklin had received the sum of one hundred pounds sterling, sent to him by benevolent persons in England, as a donation for the relief of those

who had been wounded in the encounters with the British troops, on the day of their march to Lexington and Concord, and of the widows and children of such as had been slain. While he was in the camp at Cambridge, he paid this money over to a committee of the Massachusetts Assembly.

During his absence, the Assembly of Pennsylvania met, and by the returns of the election it appeared that he had been chosen a representative for the city of Philadelphia. He was now a member of three public bodies, which convened daily for business, that is: Congress, the Assembly, and the Committee of Safety; but he usually attended in Congress, whenever the times of meeting interfered with each other.

“Ways and means were to be provided. Franklin was consulted. The marine service was to be regulated. Franklin again was in request. Even upon the device of a national seal he was engaged. While thus employed, how must the old patriot’s thoughts have carried him back to the time when, fifty years before, he was contriving ornaments for the New Jersey paper money, and to the devices and mottoes which he furnished for the Phila-

delphia Volunteers, thirty years before this period! His early publications on paper money must also have recurred to him while he was engaged in the details of the Continental paper money issue. It is to be noted that, in the emission of the money which afterwards so sadly depreciated, the advice of Franklin was not followed. He proposed that the bills should bear interest; but other counsel ruled, and this proposal was not adopted. He also recommended, after the first emission, the borrowing of the bills already issued, instead of the emission of a further sum. He advised, further, the payment of the interest in silver. Neither of these suggestions was adopted until too late to check the evil which they were intended to obviate.”\*

When Congress had brought the affairs of the army into tolerable order, they began to think of foreign alliances,—and a Committee of Secret Correspondence was appointed to keep up an intercourse with the friends of the American cause in various parts of Europe. Dr. Franklin had so long resided abroad that there was no hesitation in making him the

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\* “Life of Franklin,” by the Rev. H. H. Weld.

leading agent in these important negotiations, which were the means of accomplishing much good.

Hopes had been generally entertained that the Canadians might be persuaded to join the other Colonies in the struggle for freedom, and during the first year of the war, while the Americans had an army in Canada, there seemed some prospect that these hopes would be realized. With the death of the lamented Montgomery, however, adverse fortune began, and in the spring of 1776, the case appeared almost desperate. Congress then determined to send commissioners to Canada, who should have full powers to regulate the operations of the army, and to aid the people in forming a civil government.

Dr. Franklin, Samuel Chase, and Charles Carroll, were selected for the purpose. They left Philadelphia on the 20th of March, 1776, accompanied by Mr. John Carroll, a Roman Catholic clergyman (afterwards Archbishop of Baltimore), whose French education and religious profession it was hoped, would give him influence with the priests in Canada, and thus, indirectly, gain the good will of the people.

The dreadful condition of the roads detained the commissioners so long on the way, that the American army was in full retreat from Quebec, followed by an enemy superior in numbers, before they reached Montreal.

The truth is, the Canadians were not ready to enter upon the hazardous experiment which the other Colonies had engaged in ; and the commissioners found it useless to attempt to inspire them with the love of freedom, and a spirit of enterprise, which were foreign to the dispositions of most of them.

Dr. Franklin reached home early in June, with health much impaired by fatigue and exposure. Before his departure for Canada, he had withdrawn from the Assembly and Committee of Safety, not knowing how long he should be absent, and deeming it improper to hold public stations the duties of which he could not discharge. In his letter of resignation, he said ; "I am extremely sensible of the honor done me by my fellow-citizens, in choosing me their representative in Assembly, and of that lately conferred on me by the House, in appointing me one of the Committee of Safety for this province, and a delegate in Congress. It would be a happiness to me,

if I could serve the public duly in all those stations ; but, aged as I now am, I feel myself unequal to so much business, and on that account think it my duty to decline a part of it. I hope, therefore, that the House will be so good as to accept my excuse for not attending as a member of the present Assembly, and, if they think fit, give orders for the election of another in my place, that the city may be more completely represented. I request, also, that the House would be pleased to dispense with my further attendance as one of the Committee of Safety." On his return, therefore, he was at liberty to give his undivided attention to the national counsels in Congress. He was chosen a member of one of the committees, which assembled in June from the several counties of Pennsylvania, for the purpose of deliberating on the mode of summoning a convention to form a new constitution ; but the conference was short, and, if he attended at all, he took little part in the proceedings. .



## CHAPTER THIRTEENTH.

Ready for independence—Virginia takes the first decided step—John Dickinson has his doubts—Arguments answered—The Declaration drawn up and signed—Anecdote told by Mr. Jefferson—"We must all hang together!"—King George proposes to pardon his rebel subjects—The two Howes come over as commissioners—Correspondence with Dr. Franklin—The game of chess—"They ought to kiss and be friends"—General Sullivan carries a message to Congress—One more attempt at negotiations, and then the game ends.

MATTERS had now gone so far that a large majority of the American people were ready to declare themselves independent of the mother country, and the subject was brought before Congress in due form. The Legislature of Virginia having instructed their delegates to propose it, Richard Henry Lee had the honor of doing it, and an animated debate followed, in which the views of the more prominent members were freely expressed. While the larger number were found prepared to take a decided step without delay, some, who were equally patriotic, believed that the time had not yet come. Among the latter class was John Dickinson, a Marylander

by birth, but at this time a delegate from Pennsylvania. He had written and done so much to help forward the great struggle, that even his friends were astonished when he opposed the declaration of independence, on the ground that compromise was still practicable, and that the people were not ripe for a final separation from Great Britain. This rendered him so unpopular for a while, that he withdrew from the public councils, and did not recover his seat in Congress until two years afterwards. He then returned, earnest and decided in the cause of independence. The arguments of the doubting members were so ably met by such men as John Adams, and Lee, and Franklin, that the Declaration was drawn up, and after three days' debate, passed on the fourth of July, 1776; from which time the United States became, in fact, an independent nation.

Mr. Jefferson (who is generally regarded as the author of this famous document), relates a characteristic anecdote of Franklin connected with this subject. Being annoyed at the alterations made in his draft, while it was under discussion, and at the censures freely bestowed upon parts of it, he began to fear it would be

- dissected and mangled till a skeleton only would remain. "I was sitting," he observes, "by Dr. Franklin, who perceived that I was not insensible to these mutilations. 'I have made it a rule,' said he, 'whenever in my power, to avoid becoming the draftsman of papers to be reviewed by a public body. I took my lesson from an incident which I will relate to you. When I was a journeyman printer, one of my companions, an apprentice-hatter, having served out his time, was about to open shop for himself. His first concern was to have a handsome sign-board, with a proper inscription. He composed it in these words, *John Thompson, Hatter, makes and sells Hats for ready money*, with a figure of a hat subjoined. But he thought he would submit it to his friends for their amendments. The first he showed it to, thought the word *hatter* tautologous, because followed by the words *makes hats*, which showed he was a hatter. It was struck out. The next observed, that the word *makes* might as well be omitted, because his customers would not care who made the hats; if good and to their mind, they would buy, by whomsoever made. He struck it out. A third said he thought the

words *for ready money* were useless, as it was not the custom of the place to sell on credit. Every one who purchased, expected to pay. They were parted with; and the inscription now stood, *John Thompson sells hats*. "*Sells hats?*" says his next friend; "why, nobody will expect you to give them away. What then is the use of that word?" It was stricken out, and hats followed, the rather, as there was one painted on the board. So his inscription was reduced ultimately to *John Thompson*, with the figure of a hat subjoined.' "

There is also another anecdote related of Franklin, respecting an incident which took place when the members were about to sign the declaration. "We must be unanimous," said Hancock; "there must be no pulling different ways; we must all hang together." "Yes," replied Franklin, "we must, indeed, all hang together, or most assuredly we shall all hang separately."

About two months before the declaration of independence, Congress had recommended that some changes should be made in the systems of government of several of the Colonies, and delegates from the counties of Pennsylvania met together to form a new constitution.

Dr. Franklin was chosen president, and although occasionally absent, in order to attend to important business in the great national assembly, he continued to preside during the two months that the convention remained in session. It is not known what part he took in framing the constitution of Pennsylvania, but he certainly was not unobservant or inactive.

King George had made a speech at the opening of Parliament, in which he spoke of sending out commissioners to America, with power to grant pardons, and to receive the submission of his repentant subjects. Poor, foolish man! little did he imagine how thoroughly the affections of the Colonies had been alienated from the mother country. This appearance of mildness and a desire for peace, on the part of his majesty, was entirely concealed by Lord North's *Prohibitory Bill*, forbidding all trade and intercourse with the Colonies.

While the main body of the American army under Washington was stationed at New York, in the spring of 1776, General Howe arrived there with a large number of British troops from Halifax, and was soon afterwards joined by his brother, Lord Howe, the com-

mander of a powerful armament fresh from Europe. The two brothers were the commissioners appointed by the king. They forthwith caused the will of his gracious majesty to be made known throughout the Colonies, and Lord Howe wrote a private and friendly letter to Franklin, expressing great respect for his character, and an earnest desire that the unhappy differences between the two countries might be put to rest. It was answered by the doctor in a spirit not less friendly and respectful; but, in regard to the public communications, he said, he was sorry to find them of such a nature, since "it must give his lordship pain to be sent so far on so hopeless a business." After some other remarks, touching the conduct and designs of the ministry, he added:

"Long did I endeavor, with unfeigned and unwearied zeal, to preserve from breaking, that fine and noble china vase, the British empire; for I knew, that being once broken, the separate parts could not retain even their share of the strength or value that existed in the whole, and that a perfect reunion of those parts could scarce ever be hoped for. Your lordship may possibly remember the tears of

joy that wet my cheek, when at your good sister's in London, you once gave me expectations that a reconciliation might soon take place. I had the misfortune to find those expectations disappointed, and to be treated as the cause of the mischief I was laboring to prevent. My consolation, under that groundless and malevolent treatment, was that I retained the friendship of many wise and good men in that country, and, among the rest, some share in the regard of Lord Howe." The reference in Dr. Franklin's letter to his acquaintance with Lord Howe's sister, calls for a few words of explanation.

The American statesman and philosopher was a great admirer of chess, and among his writings, is a paper on "The Morals of Chess," in which certain wise rules are laid down, which will answer as well for the game of life as for the game of chess.

While Franklin remained in England, he was approached by various influential persons, with a view of drawing from him some feasible plan by which the political disturbances of the times might be settled. His well-known skill in the game was made the excuse for introducing him to a certain lady. The

lady proved to be a sister of Lord Howe, and Dr. Franklin, finding her of "very sensible conversation and pleasing behavior," agreed readily to renewed appointments to try her skill at chess, though at this time, he says, he "had not the least apprehension that any political business could have any connection with this new acquaintance."

At the second meeting with the lady, which occurred in December, 1774, she found a new avenue to the philosopher's good opinion, by conversing with him on a mathematical problem. Then the conversation turned from mathematics to the Parliament just assembled.

"What," said Mrs. Howe, "is to be done with this dispute between Great Britain and the Colonies? I hope we are not to have civil war."

"They ought to kiss and be friends," said the doctor; "what can they do better? Quarrelling can be of service to neither, but is ruin to both."

"I have said," replied she, "that I wished government would employ you to settle the dispute for them—I am sure nobody could do it so well. Do not you think the thing is practicable?"



"Undoubtedly, madam, if the parties are disposed to reconciliation; for the two countries have really no clashing interests to differ about. It is rather a matter of punctilio, which two or three reasonable people might settle in half an hour. I thank you for the good opinion you are pleased to express of me, but the ministry will never think of employing me in that good work; they rather choose to abuse me."

"Ay," said she, "they have behaved shamefully to you—and, indeed, some of them are now ashamed of it themselves."

Still, so much was Dr. Franklin in the habit of conversing, with different persons, about America and its affairs, he thought this but an incidental conversation.

At the next interview, which was on Christmas evening, Mrs. Howe desired permission of him to send for her brother, Lord Howe, who, she stated, desired his acquaintance, adding that "he was just by."

The doctor's eyes must, by this time, have been opened to these designed accidents, particularly when, after a long conversation on American affairs, Lord Howe desired him to draw up some propositions, embodying the

terms on which he conceived a good understanding between the countries might be obtained and established. These propositions, Lord Howe said, they might meet to consider either at his house, or at Franklin's, or where the doctor pleased. But as Franklin's visiting Lord Howe, or Lord Howe's visiting Franklin might, Lord Howe thought, occasion some speculation, it was concluded to be best to meet at his sister's, where there was a good pretence, with her family and friends, for his being often seen, as it was known they played together at chess.

She "readily offered her house for that purpose." It is evident, from the circumstances, that such was the intention from the beginning. Ladies have often lent their houses for political purposes. None appear to have done it with better motives than the Hon. Mrs. Howe. Franklin has left this record of her, that he would have no secrets in a business of the nature of that in which he was engaged, which he would not confide in her prudence; for he "had never conceived a higher opinion of the discretion and excellent understanding of any woman on so short an acquaintance." And her residence was ac-

cordingly used as the place of conference while the consultations with Lord Howe continued. The messages of Franklin and of Lord Howe, when written, passed through her hands, and when simply oral, were communicated by her.

All these various interviews and arrangements proved fruitless in the end, and we have only said thus much concerning them, that our readers might understand why Lord Howe was disposed to be on such friendly terms with Dr. Franklin.

General Sullivan having been taken prisoner in the battle of Long Island, was carried on board Lord Howe's ship, and then set at liberty, on parole, bearing from his lordship an oral message to Congress, in which the desire was expressed that some of the members of that body might be appointed to hold a private interview with him. Dr. Franklin, John Adams, and Edward Rutledge were selected for the purpose. The interview took place accordingly, but nothing was accomplished by it, and thus ended the labors of the commissioners, so far as his majesty's plan for receiving the acknowledgments of the rebels was concerned.

## CHAPTER FOURTEENTH.

Proposing an alliance with France—Three commissioners appointed—Dr. Franklin and his grandsons—Reception by the French—Takes lodgings at Passy—The venerable man—Honors paid to him—First interview of the commissioners with the French minister—Kindness in secret—Bolder measures follow—England indignant—The old enemies at war—America neither to be dragooned nor bamboozled—Sharp points and blunt ones—Reception at court—Anecdotes—Description of Franklin by a German historian—"One Benny Franklin worth two kings!"

THE American States being now an independent power, it was very proper that they should assume this character in relation to other governments. Moreover, as they greatly needed means for carrying on the war with Britain, and were able to offer a profitable commerce to those who would aid them with loans of money, they could hardly be considered as begging for help, when an arrangement, thus mutually advantageous, was proposed. The subject was discussed in Congress, and three commissioners were appointed to proceed to France, and make an application of the kind we have mentioned. Dr. Frank-

lin, Silas Dean, and Arthur Lee were selected for this important mission.

Franklin left Philadelphia on the 26th of October, 1776, accompanied by his two grandsons, William Temple Franklin, and Benjamin Franklin Bache.

Although the ship in which they sailed was sometimes chased by British cruisers, they reached Nantes on the 7th of December, and having tarried a few days to recruit, they arrived at Paris on the 21st.

Dr. Franklin's visit to France was quite unexpected, but it was generally supposed that he had come on important public business, and the friends of American liberty greeted him with lively expressions of joy. The report of his arrival was soon circulated throughout Europe; and there were few who did not know the name of the distinguished philosopher, or who had not read some productions of his pen.

He soon removed from Paris to Passy, a pleasant village about three miles off, and took lodgings in a house\* belonging to M.

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\* A modern traveller remarks that "the hotel which Dr. Franklin occupied during his mission at the court of Louis XVI., remains still in existence, although it has undergone

Leroy de Chaumont, a zealous friend to the American cause, and here he continued to reside until his final departure from France.

A French historian speaks of the distinguished stranger in these glowing words :

“By the effect which Franklin produced in France, one might say that he fulfilled his mission, not with a court, but with a free people. Diplomatic etiquette did not permit him often to hold interviews with the ministers, but he associated with the distinguished personages who directed public opinion. Men imagined they saw in him a sage of antiquity, come back to give austere lessons and generous examples to the moderns. They personi-

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many changes and alterations, since the day when, within its walls, our Minister to France pondered over the critical position of American affairs, and matured those wise plans which resulted in securing to America the alliance of the French, and in insuring and hastening her ultimate independence. The building is situated in Passy.

“The first lightning-rod which was ever erected in France, and which was placed upon this house by Franklin himself, is still shown to visitors, and is very similar in appearance to those now in use. In a rear apartment of the building is preserved all the wood-work of Franklin's grand saloon. Doors, panels, and window frames in considerable numbers show that the saloon must have been of large dimensions, and the elaborate wood-carvings and the profusion of gilding indicate that it was sumptuously adorned.”

fied in him the republic, of which he was the representative and the legislator.

“They regarded his virtues as those of his countrymen, and even judged of their physiognomy by the imposing and serene traits of his own. Happy was he who could gain admittance to see him in the house which he occupied at Passy. This venerable old man, it was said, joined to the demeanor of Phocion the spirit of Socrates. Courtiers were struck with his native dignity, and discovered in him the profound statesman. Young officers, impatient to signalize themselves in another hemisphere, came to interrogate him respecting the military condition of the Americans; and when he spoke to them with deep concern and a manly frankness of the recent defeats which had put his country in jeopardy, this only excited in them a more ardent desire to join and assist the republican soldiers.

“After this picture, it would be useless to trace the history of Franklin’s negotiations with the court of France. His virtues and his renown negotiated for him; and before the second year of his mission had expired, no one conceived it possible to refuse fleets and an army to the compatriots of Franklin.”

Portraits of the American philosopher were everywhere to be seen, and vast numbers of medallions were sold, on which his head had been represented, as an ornament for snuff-boxes, or to be set in rings and bracelets.

Congress had furnished the commissioners with the plan for a treaty of commerce, which they were to propose to the French government; and besides this they were to obtain from that court, at the expense of the United States, eight ships of war, ready for service, and to procure and forward military stores.

On the 28th of December they were admitted to an audience with the Count de Vergennes, the minister of foreign affairs; and although the friendly relations then existing between France and England made it improper for him to say, in so many words, that the application of the rebellious Colonies should be granted, the reception was very gracious, and the assurances given most encouraging.

We have not space to record all the steps which were taken before the French government came out decidedly as the ally of the United States. It is enough to say that France had resolved to help the Americans, and at first large sums were secretly advanced



for this purpose; but after the capture of Burgoyne's army, affairs began to brighten, and on the 6th of February, 1778, a treaty of alliance was made with the new republic. We need not relate how much joy tidings of this event brought to those brave men who were fighting the battles of their country. Washington appointed a day of thanksgiving and rejoicing amid all the discomforts of the army at Valley Forge.

On the 20th of March, the American commissioners were introduced to the king at Versailles, and a French writer thus describes the ceremony :

"Dr. Franklin," he says, "was accompanied and followed by a great number of Americans, and individuals from various countries, whom curiosity had drawn together. His age, his venerable aspect, the simplicity of his dress, every thing fortunate and remarkable in the life of this American, contributed to excite public attention. The clapping of hands and other expressions of joy indicated that warmth of enthusiasm of which the French are more susceptible than any other people, and the charm of which is enhanced to the object of it by their politeness and agreeable manners.

After this audience, he crossed the court on his way to the office of the minister of foreign affairs. The multitude waited for him in the passage, and greeted him with their acclamations. He met with a similar reception wherever he appeared in Paris."

From that time both Franklin and the other American commissioners attended the court at Versailles, on the same footing as the ambassadors of the European powers. Madame Campan says that, on these occasions, Franklin appeared in the dress of an American farmer. "His straight, unpowdered hair, his round hat, his brown cloth coat, formed a singular contrast with the laced and embroidered coats, and powdered and perfumed heads, of the courtiers of Versailles."

The rules of diplomatic etiquette did not permit the ambassadors of those sovereigns who had not recognized the independence of the United States to extend any official civilities to the ministers of the new republic. In private, however, they sought the acquaintance and society of Franklin, and among them were some of his most esteemed and intimate friends. An amusing incident, illustrative of the reserve of the ambassadors in

their official character occurred to Dr. Franklin some time after he became minister plenipotentiary. The son of the empress of Russia, under the title of Count du Nord, arrived in Paris. He sent round his cards to the several foreign ambassadors, with his name and that of the Prince Bariatinski, the Russian ambassador, written upon them. By some accident the messenger left one of these cards at Dr. Franklin's house. As this was the first instance of the kind, he knew not precisely in what manner the civility was to be returned. He inquired of an old minister at court, well versed in the rules of etiquette, who told him that all he had to do was to stop his carriage at the ambassador's door, and order his name to be written in the porter's book. This ceremony he performed accordingly. "I thought no more of the matter," said he, "till the servant who brought the card came in great affliction, saying he was like to be ruined, and wishing to obtain from me a paper of I know not what kind, for I did not see him. In the afternoon came my friend M. Le Roy, who is also a friend of the prince's, telling me how much he (the prince) was concerned at the accident; that both himself and the count had

great personal regard for me and my character, but that our independence not yet being acknowledged by the court of Russia, it was impossible for him to permit himself to make me a visit as minister. I told M. Le Roy it was not my custom to seek such honors, though I was very sensible of them when conferred upon me; that I should not have voluntarily intruded a visit, and that, in this case, I had only done what I was informed the etiquette required of me; but if it would be attended with any inconvenience to Prince Bariatinski, whom I much esteemed and respected, I thought the remedy was easy; he had only to erase my name out of his book of visits received, and I would burn their card."

Of course England was highly indignant that France should espouse the cause of the Colonies, and the result was that the two old enemies were soon at war again.

Meanwhile, the British ministry being now seriously alarmed about the result of the American war, employed secret emissaries to sound Dr. Franklin as to the terms on which a reconciliation of the Colonies could be effected. He, however, ridiculed the idea of any treaty with the mother country except on

the basis of independence; and exclaimed with warmth. "The Americans are neither to be *dragooned* nor *bamboozled* out of their liberty!"

The tone of his letters shows that he had got pretty much out of patience with King George and his cabinet. Thus, in writing to a friend, who had informed him that the *pointed* conductors which had been erected to protect the royal powder magazines, from lightning, had been exchanged by some stubborn English philosopher, for blunt ones—out of a spirit of jealous opposition to him, he quietly remarks: "I have never entered into any controversy in defence of my philosophical opinions: I leave them to take their chance in the world. If they *are right*, truth and experience will support them; if wrong, they ought to be refuted and rejected. Disputes are apt to sour one's temper, and disturb one's quiet. I have no private interest in the reception of my inventions by the world, having never made, nor proposed to make, the least profit by any of them. The king's changing his *pointed* conductors for *blunt* ones is, therefore, a matter of small importance to me. If I had a wish about it, it would be that he had rejected

them altogether as ineffectual. For it is only since he thought himself and family safe from the thunder of heaven, that he dared to use his own thunder in destroying his innocent subjects.”\*

We close the chapter with a description of Dr. Franklin at the French court, by a German historian, Schlosser of Heidelberg.

“Franklin’s appearance in the Paris *salons*, even before he was presented at court or began to negotiate, otherwise than through third parties, with the minister, was an event of great importance to the whole of Europe. Paris, at that time, set the fashion for the entire civilized world in Europe, and the admiration of Franklin, carried to a degree approaching folly, produced a remarkable effect on the fashionable circles of Paris. His dress, the simplicity of his external appearance, the

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\* An English epigram was published on Franklin, alluding to Sir Joseph Banks and the trick by which he made himself, with the influence of George III., president of the Royal Society.

“While you, great George, for safety hunt,  
And sharp conductors change for blunt,  
The empire’s out of joint :  
Franklin a wiser course pursues,  
And all your thunder fearless views,  
By keeping to the point.”

friendly meekness of the old man, and the apparent humility of the Quaker, procured for Freedom a mass of votaries among the court circles who used to be alarmed at its coarseness and unsophisticated truths.

“Franklin neither mistook himself nor the people with whom he had to deal. He knew mankind thoroughly, and was well aware how to use the Paris admiration of himself, and how to deal with the *salons*. In his private correspondence he describes the life in Paris and the intense worship which he received on all hands, in a comical, though masterly style. But as an American merchant, he took every advantage that a skilful dealer would derive from the fascination of his customers. If we compare the descriptions given by Lacratelle, Lafayette, Ségur, and others, of the noise made by Franklin, with the private letters which he wrote himself from Passy to America, we shall see what miserable bunglers in diplomacy the most adroit of the Parisians were, when compared with the old printer. They were led by long practice in it as an art or science; he followed nature and his own instincts, which were never wrong and were never exaggerated.

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"Nevertheless, so long as the war in America was not successful, he found that his negotiations made but slow and halting progress."\*

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\* Dr. Sprague, of Albany, who has collected a great number of autographs, made application, some time since, to a certain gentleman for that of Dr. Franklin. "Oh you have one already," said the person referred to. "No matter," replied the determined collector. "I want it for exchange. One Benny Franklin in Europe is worth *two kings*!"

This is one of the happiest compliments ever paid to the Boston printer's boy.



## CHAPTER FIFTEENTH.

Philadelphia taken by the British—Franklin's house robbed—Another source of trouble—William Franklin, the tory—Sketch of his career—Obtuseness of feeling—Matter-of-fact letter on his mother's death—Dr. Franklin's distress at the course pursued by his son—Mention made of him in his will—Lessons in French—Applauding in the wrong place—"The spectators do not pay!"—Elkanah Watson's recollections of Franklin—French dinner-party—Franklin's portrait in high company—Playing on the armonica—Weighing the chances of war—Ecstasy of joy—Paris illuminated.

WHILE Dr. Franklin and his colleagues are attending to public business at Paris, some things are taking place in America, in which he will feel some interest when he hears of them.

Congress had continued to sit in Philadelphia until the autumn of 1776, when the approach of the enemy obliged them to retire to Baltimore. The British troops took possession of the city on the 26th of September, 1777, and they remained there until the 18th of June, in the following year.\*

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\* Those interested in such things will find some curious information about the occupation of Philadelphia by the British, in Watson's *Annals*, vol. ii., p. 287.

Mrs. Bache, daughter of Dr. Franklin, occupied his house when the enemy approached Philadelphia. She left the city, and took refuge with a friend in the country. After her return in July, she thus wrote to her father. The reference to André, who afterwards played so conspicuous a part in the treasonable plots of Arnold, adds to the interest of the letter. "I found your house and furniture upon my return to town, in much better order than I had any reason to expect from the hands of such a rapacious crew; they stole and carried off with them some of your musical instruments; viz., a Welsh harp, ball harp, the set of tuned bells which were in a box, viol-de-gambs, all the spare armonica glasses, and one or two spare cases; your armonica is safe. They took, likewise, the few books that were left behind, the chief of which were Temple's school-books, and the history of the arts and sciences in French, which is a great loss to the public; some of your electric apparatus is missing also. A Captain André also took with him the picture of you which hung in the dining-room. The rest of the pictures are safe, and met with no damage, except the frame of Alfred, which is broke to

pieces; in short, considering the hurry in which we were obliged to leave the town, Sully's then situation, and the number of things we consequently left behind, we are much better off than I had any reason to expect."

But Dr. Franklin had another source of trouble which weighed upon him much more heavily, than the mere loss of property. I refer to the course pursued by his son with reference to the quarrel between the Colonies and the mother country. It is hard to realize that any member of Dr. Franklin's family could have been a tory.

William, his only son, was born in 1731. He was postmaster of Philadelphia for a short time, and served as clerk of the House of Representatives of Pennsylvania. He was also a captain in the French and Indian war, and fought bravely under Abercrombie, at Ticonderoga. Towards the close of that war, he visited England with his father, and through the influence of the Earl of Bute and Lord Fairfax, he received the appointment of governor of New Jersey.

William Franklin is the "Billy" so often spoken of in Mrs. Franklin's letters to her husband. He seems to have been a plain,

honest, business-like sort of young man, but apparently somewhat obtuse in matters of feeling. The following account of his mother's funeral says little for his heart or his fancy. The hint that his father's non-arrival may have hastened her death, is evidently nothing but a piece of clumsy blundering.

"HON'D FATHER:—I came here on Thursday last to attend the funeral of my poor old mother, who died the Monday noon preceding. Mr. Bache sent his clerk express to me on the occasion, who reached Amboy on Tuesday evening, and I set out early the next morning, but the weather being very severe and snowing hard, I was not able to reach here till about four o'clock on Thursday afternoon, about half an hour before the corpse was to be moved for interment. Mr. Bache and I followed as chief mourners; your old friend H. Roberts and several other of your friends were carriers, and a very respectable number of the inhabitants were at the funeral. I don't mention the particulars of her illness, as you will have a much fuller account from Mr. Bache than I am able to give. Her death was no more than might be reasonably expected after the paralytic stroke she received some

time ago, which greatly affected her memory and understanding. She told me when I took leave of her on my removal to Amboy, that she never expected to see you unless you returned this winter, for that she was sure she should not live till next summer. I heartily wish you had happened to have come over in the fall, as I think her disappointment in that respect preyed a good deal on her spirits."

When the difficulties between England and the Colonies were coming to a crisis, William Franklin threw his whole influence in favor of loyalty, and endeavored to prevent the legislative assembly of New Jersey from sanctioning the proceedings of the General Congress at Philadelphia. The efforts, however, did but little to stay the tide of popular sentiment in favor of resistance to tyranny, and soon involved him in difficulty. He was deposed from office by the whigs to give place to William Livingston, and sent a prisoner to Connecticut, where he remained about two years in East Windsor, in the house of Captain Ebenezer Grant, near where the Theological Seminary now stands. In 1778 he was exchanged, and soon after went to England. There he spent the remainder of his life, re-

ceiving a pension from the British government for the losses he had sustained by his fidelity. He died in 1812, at the age of 82.

As might be expected, his opposition to the cause of liberty, so dear to the heart of his father, produced an estrangement between them. For years they had no intercourse. When, in 1784, the son wrote to his father, in his reply, Dr. Franklin says, "Nothing has ever hurt me so much, and affected me with such keen sensations, as to find myself deserted in my old age by my only son; and not only deserted, but to find him taking up arms against me in a cause wherein my good fame, fortune, and all were at stake." In his will also, he alludes to the part his son acted. After making him some bequests, he adds: "The part he acted against me in the last war, which is of public notoriety, will account for my leaving him no more of an estate he endeavored to deprive me of." The patriotism of the father stands forth all the brighter when contrasted with the desertion of the son.

But to return from this digression.

Franklin spoke French but indifferently, and his pronunciation was defective, although he could read it very well. He told John

Adams that he was wholly inattentive to the grammar. Madame Geoffrin, to whom, in his visit to France, in 1767 or 1769, he brought a letter from David Hume, reported that she could not initiate him into the language. Notwithstanding his advanced age when he established himself at Passy, he lived to make a great improvement in speaking French, and to enjoy it perfectly in the hearing. In the year 1779, he read a paper on the *Aurora Borealis* to the Royal Academy of Sciences at Paris, in which he traced the phenomenon to electrical agencies.

At times he would be led into amusing misapprehensions, through his difficulty in understanding the language when uttered with rapidity. On one occasion, being present at a sitting of the Lyceum or the Academy during the delivery of a lecture, and not distinctly understanding the French that was spoken, he thought, in order not to be wanting in politeness, that every time he saw Madame de Boufflers give signs of approbation, he would applaud; but he afterwards found that without knowing it, he had applauded most vigorously those passages which had been complimentary to himself.

We quote the following anecdote from the "Literary Correspondence of Grim and Diderot," which we believe has never appeared out of its French dress before. It is dated, July, 1778.

- "Dr. Franklin speaks little, and at the beginning of his sojourn in Paris, when France still refused to declare herself openly in favor of the Colonies, he spoke still less. At a dinner of literary men, one of the company in order to start the conversation, began by saying to him, 'It must be acknowledged, sir, that it is a great and superb spectacle that America offers to us to-day.' 'Yes,' modestly replied the Philadelphia doctor, '*but the spectators do not pay.*' "

As we have devoted this chapter, thus far, to a variety of topics, serving as the smaller rivulets which meet together and help to form the main current of history, it will be best to conclude it in the same way.

Some of the most interesting notices of Dr. Franklin's residence in France are found in the memoirs of Elkanah Watson, and we shall select a passage here and there. In 1779, we find him dining, by invitation, with M. Le Roy de Chaumont, in company with the



American philosopher. "We entered a spacious room," says Mr. Watson, "I following the doctor, where several well-dressed persons (to my unsophisticated American eyes, gentlemen) bowed to us profoundly. These were servants. A folding-door opened at our approach, and presented to my view a brilliant assembly, who all greeted the wise old man in the most cordial and affectionate manner. He introduced me as a young American, just arrived. One of the young ladies approached him with the familiarity of a daughter, tapped him kindly on the cheek, and called him 'Papa Franklin.' I was enraptured with the ease and freedom exhibited in the table intercourse in France. Instead of the cold ceremony and formal compliments to which I had been accustomed on such occasions, here all appeared at ease, and well sustained. Some were amusing themselves with music; others with singing. Some were waltzing; and others gathered in little groups in conversation. At the table, the ladies and gentlemen were mingled together, and joined in cheerful conversation, each selecting the delicacies of various courses, and drinking of delicious light wines, but with neither toasts nor healths. The lady of the

house, instead of bearing the burden and inconvenience of superintending the duties of the table, here participates alike with others in its enjoyment. No gentlemen, I was told, would be tolerated in France in monopolizing the conversation of the table with discussions of politics or religion, as is frequently the case in America. A cup of coffee ordinarily terminates the dinner."

Mr. Watson continues on another page: "In a gallery of paintings in the Louvre, I was much gratified in perceiving the portrait of Franklin, near those of the king and queen, placed there as a mark of distinguished respect, and, as was understood, in conformity with royal directions. Few foreigners have been presented to the court of St. Cloud who have acquired so much popularity as Dr. Franklin. I have seen the populace attend his carriage, in the manner they followed the king's. His venerable figure, the ease of his manners, formed in an intercourse of fifty years with the world, his benevolent countenance, and his fame as a philosopher, all tended to excite love, and to command influence and respect. He had attained, by the exercise of these qualities, a powerful interest in the feelings of the beau-

tiful queen of France. She held at that time a powerful political influence. The exercise of that influence, adroitly directed by Franklin, tended to produce the acknowledgment of our independence, and the subsequent efficient measures pursued by France in its support."

The next extract, although somewhat longer, is too interesting to be omitted :

"Soon after my return to Paris" (he is writing in 1781), "I dined and spent the evening with the immortal Franklin. Arriving at an early hour, I discovered the philosopher in a distant room reading, in the exact posture in which he is represented by an admirable engraving from his portrait; his left arm resting upon the table, and his chin supported by the thumb of his right hand. His mingling in the most refined and exalted society of both hemispheres had communicated to his manners a blandness and urbanity well sustained by his native grace and elegance of deportment. His venerable locks waving over his shoulders, and the dignity of his personal appearance, commanded reverence and respect, and yet his manners were so pleasant and fascinating, that one felt at ease and unrestrained in his presence. He inquired whether I knew he was a

musician ; and he conducted me across the room to an instrument of his own invention, which he called the armonica. The music was produced by a peculiar combination of hemispherical glasses. At my solicitation, he played upon it, and performed some Scotch pastorales with great effect. The exhibition was truly striking and interesting : to contemplate an eminent statesman, in his seventy-sixth year, and the most distinguished philosopher of the age, performing a simple pasturale, on an instrument of his own construction. The interest was not diminished by the fact that this philosopher, who was guiding the intellects of thousands ; that this statesman, an object of veneration in the metropolis of Europe, and who was influencing the destiny of nations, had been an untutored printer's boy in America.

“ Our conversation during the evening was turned to the all-absorbing subject of the great combination of the French and American forces against Cornwallis. Our last information left the affairs in Virginia in a precarious and doubtful posture. De Grasse had entered the Chesapeake ; Washington and Rochambeau had united their forces ; De Barras, with seven sail of the line, had left Rhode Island to

join De Grasse. The British fleet had sailed from New York with ten thousand troops to relieve Cornwallis, and it was reported that a reinforcement had departed from England for New York. Thus stood the general aspect of our intelligence, at a crisis which seemed to involve the existence of a young empire. We weighed probabilities, balanced possible vicissitudes, dissected maps. We feared that the British fleet might intercept De Barras at the Capes of Virginia, and thus retrieve its superiority over De Grasse, attack, and overwhelm him, and, landing their army, defeat and break up the combinations of Washington. The philosophy and self-possession even of Franklin seemed almost to abandon him. The vibrations of hope and fear occupied his mind, and still I could perceive in him a deep conviction of a successful issue to the operations of Washington. I left him at night in the company of Dr. Bancroft, an American, residing in London, but an ardent whig, and I returned to Paris, in deep despondency, sighing over the miseries of our bleeding country.

“At dawn the next morning I was aroused by a thundering rap at my door. It brought me a circular from Dr. Franklin, struck off by

a machine somewhat similar to the copying machines of the present day, and with what unspeakable thankfulness and thrilling interest I read its contents! It was as follows:

“ ‘Copy of a note from Count de Vergennes to Dr. Franklin, dated Versailles, 19th Nov., 1781—11 o’clock at night:

“ ‘SIR: I cannot better express my gratitude to you, for the news you often communicate to me, than by informing you that the Duc de Lausan arrived this evening, with the agreeable news that the combined armies of France and America have forced Cornwallis to capitulate. The English garrison came out of Yorktown the 19th of October, with honors of war, and laid down their arms as prisoners. About six thousand troops, eighteen hundred sailors, twenty-two stand of colors, and one hundred and seventy pieces of cannon—seventy-five of which are brass—are the trophies which signalize this victory; besides, a ship of fifty guns was burnt, also a frigate, and a great number of transports.

“ ‘I have the honor, &c.,

“ ‘DE VERGENNES.

“ ‘To his Excellency Dr. FRANKLIN.’

“The next day I waited on Dr. Franklin, together with many American and French gentlemen, to offer our united congratulations. He appeared in an ecstasy of joy, observing, ‘There is no parallel in history of two entire armies being captured from the same enemy in any one war.’

“The delight and the rejoicings of all classes of the people were excessive. Paris was illuminated for three successive nights. On my return to Nantes, along the banks of the Loire, I found all the cities in a blaze of illumination, and Nantes in the midst of it on my arrival.”

## CHAPTER SIXTEENTH.

Thoughtful arrangement to prevent Captain Cook's vessel from being disturbed—Less about Lafayette than his goodness merits—Correspondence upon the presentation of a sword—Another character, and quite a different one—"The Age of Reason"—Franklin's noble letter to Paine—Publication of the miserable work—Paine becomes an object of abhorrence to all good men—His death, as described by an eye-witness—An additional antidote for the poison—"I would give worlds, had the 'Age of Reason' never been published!"—Twofold warnings.

**A**LTHOUGH Dr. Franklin had been so busy with public affairs, his interest in scientific pursuits had not abated, and he was always ready to promote whatever could be useful to mankind.

When Captain Cook's vessel was about to return from a voyage of discovery, he addressed a circular letter to the commanders of American cruisers, in his character of minister plenipotentiary, requesting them to allow the famous English seaman to pass unmolested, and to treat him and his crew with civility and kindness.

The British government did not forget this



act of magnanimity, but when Cook's voyage was published, a handsome copy was sent to Dr. Franklin, by the Board of Admiralty, with the approbation of the king.

In all that we have said, thus far, in regard to the relations between France and the United States, the name of the good and the gallant Lafayette has scarcely been mentioned. This silence has not been owing to any want of appreciation of his merits, and of his claim to the gratitude of those whose liberties he helped to gain, but because our narrative is necessarily a brief one, and circumstances which would call us aside from its chief design are seldom introduced.

Lafayette joined our Revolutionary army in 1777, and with his purse, sword, and political influence with the French court, he rendered most important services. In the autumn of the following year, when he obtained leave of absence, and returned to his native land, Congress, in connection with the resolution for granting him a furlough, also resolved: "That the minister plenipotentiary of the United States of America at the court of Versailles be directed to cause an elegant sword, with proper devices, to be made, and presented, in

the name of the United States to Lafayette." In accordance with this resolution, Dr. Franklin procured the sword, and sent it to the marquis, with the following complimentary letter.

PASSY, 24th August, 1779.

SIR: The Congress, sensible of your merit towards the United States, but unable adequately to reward it, determined to present you with a sword as a small mark of their grateful acknowledgment. They directed it to be ornamented with suitable devices. Some of the principal actions of the war, in which you distinguished yourself by your bravery and conduct, are, therefore, represented upon it. These, with a few emblematic figures, all admirably well executed, make its principal value. By the help of the exquisite artists France affords, I find it easy to express every thing but the sense we have of your worth, and our obligations to you. For this, figures, and even words, are found insufficient. I therefore only add, that, with the most perfect esteem, I have the honor to be, &c.,

B. FRANKLIN.

P. S. My grandson goes to Havre with the

sword, and will have the honor of presenting it to you.

The marquis in reply, after acknowledging the presentation of the sword, said :

“In some of the devices I cannot help finding too honorable a reward for those slight services which, in concert with my fellow-soldiers, and under the god-like American hero's orders, I had the good luck to render. The sight of these actions, where I was a witness of American bravery and patriotic spirit, I shall ever enjoy with that pleasure which becomes a heart glowing with love for the nation, and the most ardent zeal for their glory and happiness. Assurances of gratitude, which I beg leave to present to your excellency, are much too inadequate to express my feelings, and nothing but those sentiments may properly acknowledge your kindness towards me. The polite manner in which Mr. Franklin was pleased to deliver that estimable sword, lays me under great obligations to him, and demands my particular thanks. With the most perfect respect, I have the honor to be, &c.,

“LA FAYETTE.”

We have now another character to introduce, and we are disposed to beg pardon of the good marquis, for placing his name in the same chapter even, with a person so odious as Thomas Paine.

This miserable man, it must be acknowledged, deserves some credit for those stirring pamphlets which he wrote, rousing the minds of the outraged Colonists to assert their rights; but the United States afterwards paid him well for all that he had done.

When the war was over, and he needed some other excitement to occupy his restless spirit, his vanity prompted him to publish a work against the Christian religion. Before committing it to the press, he submitted the manuscript to Franklin for his inspection and opinion, and received the following reply. It was written about the year 1788, while the doctor was yet in Paris.

DEAR SIR:

I have read your manuscript with some attention. By the argument it contains against a particular Providence, though you allow a general Providence, you strike at the foundations of all religion. For without the

belief of a Providence, that takes cognizance of, guards, and guides, and may favor particular persons, there is no motive to worship a Deity, to fear His displeasure, or to pray for His protection. I will not enter into any discussion of your principles, though you seem to desire it. At present I shall only give you my opinion, that, though your reasonings are subtile, and may prevail with some readers, you will not succeed so as to change the general sentiments of mankind on that subject, and the consequence of printing this piece will be a great deal of odium drawn upon yourself, mischief to you, and no benefit to others. He that spits against the wind, spits in his own face. But were you to succeed, do you imagine any good would be done by it? You yourself may find it easy to live a virtuous life, without the assistance afforded by religion; you having a clear perception of the advantages of virtue, and the disadvantages of vice, and possessing a strength of resolution sufficient to enable you to resist common temptations. But think how great a portion of mankind consists of weak and ignorant men and women, and of inexperienced, inconsiderate youth of both sexes, who have need of the

motives of religion to restrain them from vice, to support their virtue, and retain them in the practice of it till it becomes *habitual*, which is the great point for its security. And perhaps you are indebted to her originally, that is, to your religious education, for the habits of virtue upon which you now justly value yourself. You might easily display your excellent talents of reasoning upon a less hazardous subject, and thereby obtain a rank with our most distinguished authors. For among us it is not necessary, as among the Hottentots, that a youth, to be raised into the company of men, should prove his manhood by beating his mother. I would advise you, therefore, not to attempt unchaining the tiger, but to burn this piece before it is seen by any other person; whereby you will save yourself a great deal of mortification by the enemies it may raise against you, and perhaps a good deal of regret and repentance. If men are so wicked *with religion*, what would they be *if without it*.

I intend this letter itself as a *proof* of my friendship, and, therefore, add no *professions* to it; but subscribe simply yours,

B. FRANKLIN.

Happy would it have been for Paine had he heeded this kindly warning. But he preferred to follow his own inclinations, and the wretched publication was given to the world. This mad assault upon Christianity was followed by a letter to General Washington, heaping abuse on his spotless name. After this, Paine was despised and avoided by all, and soon abandoned himself to hard drink, and became too disgusting an object to look upon. He died on the 8th of June, 1809, but not until he had experienced the fearful horrors of remorse. "During my residence in the city of New York," says Bishop Eastburn, of Massachusetts, "one of my parishioners was the physician who attended, in his last illness, the famous Thomas Paine. And I had it from the lips of that person, that this noted blasphemer, not many hours before his departure, and while in the full possession of his mental faculties, was overheard by him calling repeatedly for help on that very Lord Jesus Christ, whom it had been the object of all his previous life to hold up to scorn and execration. His end was the very consummation of fear and foreboding."

The following impressive statement is taken

from the *Presbyterian*. It gives the testimony of another eye-witness. "There is now in Philadelphia a lady who saw Paine on his dying bed. Her intelligence and high character entitle her statement to the most implicit credence. She informs us that Paine's physician also attended her father's family in the city of New York, where in her youth she resided, and that on one occasion while at their house, he proposed to her to accompany him to the infidel's dwelling, which she did. It was a miserable hovel, in what was then Raisin-street. She had often seen Paine before, a drunken profligate, wandering about the streets, from whom the children fled in terror. On entering the room where he lay, she found him stretched on his miserable bed, clad in a flannel shirt, with a red cap drawn over his head. His visage was lean and haggard, and wore the expression of great agony. He expressed himself without reserve as to his fears of death, and repeatedly called on the name of Jesus, begging for mercy. The scene was impressive and appalling, and was engraven so deeply on her mind that nothing could obliterate it. The statement of the physician, which afterwards appeared in print,



entirely corresponds with what she saw and heard. We have, therefore, the testimony of two credible witnesses, that the wretched man who had spent his life in reviling the Christian religion, and poisoning the minds of his fellow-creatures with his infidel sentiments, renounced them in his dying hour, and called upon that Saviour whom he had despised, to save him from the terrible retribution which he felt was about to follow his infamous life. Conscience had already begun the work, which he had but too good reason to fear would be continued after death by the worm that never dies. However much Paine's followers may applaud his writings, his dying hours refute them all."

As so much mischief has been done by Paine's "Age of Reason," it can hardly be considered time wasted, to furnish an antidote for the poison. We therefore add another piece of information, derived from a trustworthy source. "A few weeks since," writes the correspondent of a leading journal, "a fact in the life of Thomas Paine reminded me, most forcibly, of the importance of having all our actions good and useful. It occurred just after the publication of his 'Age of Reason.'"

"My uncle, J. B., then a youth of nineteen

years, was predisposed to skepticism, and had for a long time desired to read Paine's works. Having been to Sing Sing, N. Y., on business, the innkeeper, as he was about to return, observed to him that there was a gentleman who wished to get a ride; and if he would carry him, he would speak to him. Mr. K. inquired who he was. The innkeeper replied, 'It is Mr. Thomas Paine, recently returned from England.' This highly pleased Mr. K.; for he had long desired an interview with him. Mr. Paine took his seat by his side, and they rode away. Their conversation immediately turned upon his recently published theological works. Mr. K. having cherished a hope that the claims of the Bible might be proved null and void, began to congratulate him on the anticipated success of the 'Age of Reason.' Paine inquired after its popularity, wishing to know how it was received, what his neighbors thought of it, &c., and drew out of him all he felt disposed to say. After satisfying himself with these inquiries, he took a long breath, and made, subsequently, the following reply: 'Well, sir, I am sorry that that work ever went to press. I wrote it more for my own amusement and to see what I could do than

any design of benefiting the world. *I would give worlds,*' said he, with great emphasis, *'had I them at my command, had the "Age of Reason" never been published!* No, sir, I regret the publication of that work exceedingly. It can never do the world any good, and its sarcastic style will, doubtless, lead thousands to esteem lightly the only book of correct morals that has ever blessed the world. I would advise you,' continued Paine, turning his eye to meet Mr. K.'s, 'not to read that work.' At this, Mr. K. said he 'was perfectly surprised.' He knew not what to say. 'What!' thought he, 'the author of a book so notorious, repudiating all faith in his own work! What confidence can he expect others to have in it, if he has none himself? If Paine himself cannot rely on his writings, how shall other men dare to trust themselves in the belief of them? If the "Age of Reason" will not answer for its author, it will not answer for me, or for any other person in the world.' Mr. K. took up with Paine's advice, 'not to read that work,' for he felt no concern to pore over three or four hundred pages, simply to fill his mind with an acknowledged lie, and from that time his tendencies to skepticism left him."

I have seen boys get together in the evening after a day's labor, and sit and tell stories. One relates a wonderful exploit, and another is reminded of an achievement, and another has a heroic deed to tell of, and so they go round, each one vieing with the other in attempts to tell the biggest story. This must have been the real heart of Paine when he sat down and took his pen to traduce and belie the sacred volume. He felt like making out a good story, which he in his heart did not believe. Notice, then, two fearful warnings:

1. All those who read and believe Tom Paine's "Age of Reason," are more credulous than the noted author himself, for he had no confidence in his own story.

2. An infidel may begin his suffering in this world for the publication of his wicked doctrines. What a regret fills the poor man's mind! "I would give worlds, had I them at my command, if the 'Age of Reason' had never been published!" Oh! you who are tempted to reject the record God gave of his Son, beware!

## CHAPTER SEVENTEENTH.

Some leading events briefly noted—Dr. Franklin requests to be recalled home—After waiting three years longer, the petition is granted—Bidding farewell to France—Meets with friends at Southampton—Landing at Philadelphia—amidst the ringing of bells, and other demonstrations of joy—Action of the General Assembly—Chosen President of Pennsylvania—“I am got into my niche, after being kept out of it twenty-four years”—A delegate to a most important convention—Franklin’s speech in defence of daily prayers—“God governs in the affairs of men”—Signing the Constitution—The sun behind the president’s chair.

WE must briefly note the leading events connected with Dr. Franklin’s negotiations abroad, and then follow him once more to Philadelphia.

The British ministry having failed in their efforts to bring about a reconciliation with the Colonies, afterwards attempted to separate America from France, and to excite a jealousy between the two countries ; but all these plans were defeated by the firmness and prudence of the American commissioners.

When the treaty was made with France, of which we have spoken before, Dr. Franklin

was appointed minister plenipotentiary to the court of that country ; and towards the end of the war, he was named one of the commissioners for negotiating the peace with England.

At the close of this important business (November, 1782), he requested to be recalled, after fifty years spent in the service of his country. This petition was not granted until 1785. During the interval, he negotiated two treaties, one with Sweden, and another with Prussia.

When Franklin seriously entered upon his preparations for returning to America, many who revered and loved him, began to express their sincere regrets. One after another they took their leave of him, while the principal personages of the court testified their respect and good wishes. "I have learned with much concern," said Count de Vergennes, "of your retiring, and of your approaching departure for America. You cannot doubt that the regrets which you will leave will be proportionate to the consideration you so justly enjoy. I can assure you, sir, that the esteem the king entertains for you does not leave you any thing to wish, and that his majesty will learn with real satisfaction, that your fellow-

citizens have rewarded, in a manner worthy of you, the important services that you have rendered them. I beg, sir, that you will preserve for me a share in your remembrance, and never doubt the sincerity of the interest I take in your happiness." The Marquis de Castris, minister of marine, wrote to him: "I was not apprised, until within a few hours, of the arrangements you have made for your departure. Had I been informed of it sooner, I should have proposed to the king to order a frigate to convey you to your own country, in such a manner as would mark the consideration which you have acquired by your distinguished services in France, and the particular esteem which his majesty entertains for you."

His bodily infirmities were such that he could not bear the motion of a carriage. He left Passy on the 12th of July, in the queen's litter, which had been kindly offered to him for his journey to Havre de Grace. This vehicle was borne by Spanish mules, and he was able to travel in it without pain or fatigue. He slept the first night at St. Germain. Some of his friends accompanied him. On the journey he passed one night at the chateau of the Cardinal de la Rochefoucauld, and an-

other in the house of Mr. Holker, at Rouen ; and he received civilities and complimentary visits from many of the inhabitants at different places. The sixth day after leaving Passy he arrived at Havre de Grace.

From that port he passed over in a packet-boat to Southampton.

Here he was met by Bishop Shipley and his family, as we related in chapter eleventh. Here also he found his son William, whom he had not seen for more than nine years, and whose course in regard to politics, meanwhile, had occasioned his father much distress.

Dr. Franklin sailed from Southampton on the 27th of July, and landed at Philadelphia on the 14th of September, having suffered less inconvenience during the voyage than he anticipated. He was greeted by a large concourse of his fellow-citizens, at Market-street wharf, who followed him with acclamations to his own door, while the ringing of bells and firing of cannon testified to the general joy that was felt at his safe return.

As soon as his arrival was known, letters of congratulation came from all quarters ; General Washington being among the first to welcome him. The Assembly of Pennsylvania



was then in session, and the day after he landed, an address was presented to him by that body, in which they congratulate him, in the most cordial manner, on his safe return. "We are confident," they observe, "that we speak the sentiments of this whole country, when we say, that your services, in the public councils and negotiations, have not only merited the thanks of the present generation, but will be recorded in the pages of history to your immortal honor; and it is particularly pleasing to us, that while we are sitting as members of the Assembly of Pennsylvania, we have the happiness of welcoming into the State a person who was so greatly instrumental in forming its free constitution." This was followed by a similar address from the American Philosophical Society, and the Faculty of the University of Pennsylvania. To all of them he returned brief and appropriate answers.

Having reached the advanced age of eighty-one, Dr. Franklin might reasonably have supposed that his public life was at an end; but he had only been at home a few days, when he was elected a member of the Supreme Executive Council of Pennsylvania, and, when

the Assembly met in October, he was chosen president of the State, an office answering that of governor in the other States. He was re-elected to the same office for three successive years, and so completely did he discharge its duties, that he would undoubtedly have been continued in the same honorable position, had not the terms of the existing constitution prevented.

He was apparently at ease in his private circumstances, and happy in his domestic relations. He occupied himself for some time in finishing a house which had been begun many years before, and in which he fitted up a spacious apartment for his library. In writing to a friend, he said: "I am surrounded by my offspring, a dutiful and affectionate daughter in my house, with six grandchildren, the eldest of whom you have seen, who is now at college in the next street, finishing the learned part of his education; the others promising, both for parts and good dispositions. What their conduct may be, when they grow up and enter the important scenes of life, I shall not live to *see*, and I cannot *foresee*. I therefore enjoy among them the present hour, and leave the future to Providence."

Again, to another correspondent he wrote :  
“I am got into my *niche*, after being kept out of it twenty-four years by foreign employments. It is a very good house, that I built so long ago to retire into, without being able till now to enjoy it. I am again surrounded by my friends, with a fine family of grand-children about my knees, and an affectionate, good daughter and son-in-law to take care of me. And after fifty years’ public service, I have the pleasure to find the esteem of my country with regard to me undiminished.”

Much of his time was devoted to the society of those around him, and of the numerous visitors whom curiosity and respect prompted to seek his acquaintance. His attachments to the many intimate friends he had left in Europe were likewise preserved by a regular and affectionate correspondence, in which are manifested the same steadiness of feeling and enlarged benevolence, the same playfulness and charm of style that are conspicuous in the compositions of his earlier years.

Dr. Franklin was elected one of the delegates from Pennsylvania to the convention for forming the Constitution of the United States, which met at Philadelphia in May, 1787.

The session lasted four months; but he attended most faithfully to the important business before that body, besides discharging his duties as president of the State. One of his speeches is worthy of being printed in letters of gold. The convention had been in session four or five weeks, and very little progress had been made in their work, on account of differences and disagreements, when Franklin rose in his place, and introduced a motion for daily prayer. "No one," remarks Bishop Potter of Pennsylvania, "will accuse him of superstition or of an undue regard for the supernatural. All will admit that few men ever surpassed him as a shrewd observer of life and of human affairs, or as a profound inquirer after the causes and principles that lie at the bottom of great events."\*

Listen to his language:

"In the beginning of the contest with Britain, when we were sensible of danger, we had daily prayers in this room for the divine protection. Our prayers, sir, were heard, and they were graciously answered. All of us

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\* Philadelphia Lectures on the Evidences of Christianity, p. 143.

who were engaged in the struggle must have observed frequent instances of a superintending Providence in our favor. To that kind Providence we owe this happy opportunity of consulting in peace on the means of establishing our future national felicity. And have we now forgotten that powerful Friend, or do we imagine we no longer need His assistance? I have lived, sir, a long time, and the longer I live the more convincing proofs I see of this truth, *that God governs in the affairs of men*. And if a sparrow cannot fall to the ground without His notice, is it probable that an empire can rise without His aid? We have been assured, sir, in the sacred writings, that, 'except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it.' I firmly believe this, and I also believe that without His concurring aid we shall succeed in this political building no better than the builders of Babel; we shall be divided by our little, partial, local interests; our projects will be confounded, and we ourselves shall become a reproach and a by-word down to future ages; and, what is worse, mankind may hereafter, from this unfortunate instance, despair of establishing government by human wisdom, and leave it to chance, war,

and conquest. I therefore beg leave to move that henceforth prayers, imploring the assistance of Heaven and its blessing on our deliberations, be held in this Assembly every morning before we proceed to business, and that one or more of the clergy of this city be requested to officiate in that service."

At the close of this most important convention, as the members on the last day of the session were signing the Constitution, Dr. Franklin, looking towards the president's chair, at the back of which a sun was painted, observed to those persons next to him: "I have often and often, in the course of the session, and the vicissitudes of my hopes and fears as to its issue, looked at that sun behind the president, without being able to tell whether it was rising or setting. At length I have the happiness to know it is a rising and not a setting sun."\*

May the God of our fathers grant that no angry and portentous clouds may darken our political horizon, and that the sun of this republic may never more go down.

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\* "The Madison Papers," vol. iii., p. 1624.

## CHAPTER EIGHTEENTH.

Franklin's writings easily identified—The germs of ideas now triumphant—"Words spoken in season"—Copper coinage—A good suggestion—The Franklin copper—The Order of the Cincinnati, and its hereditary honors—Washington quiets a storm—Ascending and descending honors—Ribbons and medals—The bald eagle which looked like a turkey—A bird of courage—The dead fly restored to life—Franklin's wish—Wonders he might have seen.

THERE is such pith and point in all of Dr. Franklin's writings, that his name need hardly be appended to them in order that they may be identified. It is fortunate that this is the case, as he took very little pains to secure credit to himself in this way. He seems to have valued the pen—as he did time, money, and experience—for its direct tendency to extend knowledge, comfort, and utility. "If we glance at the subjects and occasions of his tracts, letters, reports, pamphlets, and essays," remarks Mr. Tuckerman, "we shall find they embrace the whole circle of questions important to his country and his age,—morals, the economy of life, commerce, finance, history, and politics. We find in them the germs of

ideas now triumphant; of principles, through his advocacy, in no small degree, since embodied in action, and brought to grand practical results. A parable wins men to toleration; a maxim guides them to frugality; a comprehensive argument initiates the plan of that federal union which has proved the keystone of our national prosperity; the farmer or the mariner, consulting 'Poor Richard's Almanac' to learn the fluctuation of weather or tide, finds, beside these chronicles of Nature's mysteries, advice which puts him unconsciously on the track of provident habits, temperance, and contentment; the patriot in the field is cheered by the wisdom of the judge in council; the shipwright, the horticulturist, the printer, the lowly aspirant for self-improvement, as well as the statesman and the philosopher, find wisdom and encouragement from his 'words spoken in season;' in the prudent household his name is associated with the invaluable heating apparatus that saves their fuel and increases the genial warmth of the evening fireside; in the disconsolate crisis of war his foreign diplomacy and judicious hints warm the heart of valor with the prescience of success; in the land of his



country's enemies, his clear statement of grievances, and his intrepid reproof of injustice, conciliate the nobler spirits there, and vindicate the leaders at home; the encroachments of savage tribes are checked, the policy of colonial rule softened, the comforts of domestic life enhanced, the resources of the mind elicited, and, in a word, the basis of national prosperity laid on the eternal foundation of popular enlightenment, self-reliance, and foresight, by the oracles of the American philosopher thus casually uttered and incidentally proclaimed."

The matter-of-fact and useful turn of Dr. Franklin's mind is shown in a letter addressed to Edward Bridgen, with reference to a copper coinage for the United States:

PASSY, 2d October, 1779.

DEAR SIR:

I received your favor of the 17th past, and the two samples of copper are since come to hand. The metal seems to be very good, and the price reasonable; but I have not yet received the orders necessary to justify my making the purchase proposed. There has indeed been an intention to strike copper coin,

that may not only be useful as small change, but serve other purposes. Instead of repeating continually upon every halfpenny the dull story that everybody knows—and what it would have been no loss to mankind if nobody had ever known—that George the Third is king of Great Britain, France, and Ireland, &c., &c., to put on one side some important proverb of Solomon, some pious moral, prudential, or economical precept, the frequent inculcation of which, by seeing it every time one receives a piece of money, might make an impression upon the mind, especially of young persons, and tend to regulate the conduct; such as, on some, *The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom*; on others, *Honesty is the best policy*; on others, *He that by the plough would thrive, himself must either hold or drive*; on others, *Keep thy shop, and thy shop will keep thee*; on others, *A penny saved is a penny got*; on others, *He that buys what he has no need of, will soon be forced to sell his necessities*; on others, *Early to bed, and early to rise, will make a man healthy, wealthy, and wise*; and so on, to a great variety.

The other side it was proposed to fill with

good designs, drawn and engraved by the best artists in France, of all the different species of barbarity with which the English have carried on the war in America, expressing every abominable circumstance of their cruelty and inhumanity that figures can express, to make an impression on the minds of posterity as strong and durable as that on the copper. This resolution has been a long time forborne; but the late burning of defenceless towns in Connecticut, on the flimsy pretence that the people fired from behind their houses, when it is known to have been premeditated and ordered from England, give the finishing provocation, and may occasion a vast demand for your metal. I thank you for your kind wishes respecting my health. I return them most cordially fourfold into your own bosom.

Adieu.

B. FRANKLIN.

A coin was issued from the United States mint in 1787, called the "Fugio, or Franklin copper," because of the pithy advice in the legend, "Mind your business," which sounds like the philosopher, and which tradition has generally ascribed to him. We give a drawing of this copper here.



Dr. Franklin's republican simplicity was manifested in his opposition to the Order of the Cincinnati, established by the officers of the Revolutionary army, in 1783, to perpetuate their friendship, and to raise a fund for relieving the widows and orphans of those who had fallen during the war. The honors of the society were designed to be hereditary in the eldest male line of the original members, and it was to this feature of its constitution that most objection was made. By the advice of Gen. Washington, the first president of the order, the hereditary principle was abandoned, and thus a menacing storm was silenced.\*

Before giving Franklin's witty and sarcastic communication on the subject, it should be mentioned that the badge of the society is a

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\* Some interesting details in regard to the Order of the Cincinnati, are contained in Kapp's "Life of Baron Steuben," p. 558, etc.

bald eagle, suspended by a blue ribbon edged with white, emblematic of the union of France and America.

In a letter from France, to his daughter, Mrs. Bache, written in 1784, Franklin thus speaks of the Order of the Cincinnati:

“ My opinion of the institution cannot be of much importance ; I only wonder that, when the united wisdom of our nation, had, in the articles of confederation, manifested their dislike of establishing ranks of nobility, by authority either of Congress, or of any particular State, a number of private persons should think proper to distinguish themselves and their posterity, from their fellow-citizens, and form an order of *hereditary knights*, in direct opposition to the solemnly declared sense of their country ! I imagine it must be likewise contrary to the good sense of most of those drawn into it by the persuasion of its projectors, who have been too much struck with the ribbons and crosses they have seen hanging to the button-holes of foreign officers. And I suppose those who disapprove of it have not hitherto given it much opposition, from a principle somewhat like that of your good mother, relating to punctilious persons, who

are always exacting little observances of respect; that, *if people can be pleased with small matters, it is a pity that they should not have them.* In this view, perhaps, I should not myself, if my advice had been asked, have objected to their wearing their ribbon and badge themselves according to their fancy, though I certainly should to the entailing it as an honor on their posterity. For honor, worthily obtained (as that, for example, of our officers), is in its nature a *personal* thing, and incommunicable to any but those who had some share in obtaining it. Thus, among the Chinese, the most ancient, and from long experience the wisest of nations, honor does not *descend*, but *ascends*. If a man from his learning, his wisdom, or his valor, is promoted by the emperor to the rank of mandarin, his parents are immediately entitled to all the ceremonies of respect from the people, that are established as due to the mandarin himself; on the supposition that it must have been owing to the education, instruction, and good example afforded him by his parents, that he was rendered capable of serving the public.

“The *ascending* honor is therefore useful to

the State, as it encourages parents to give their children a good and virtuous education. But the *descending honor*, to a posterity who could have no share in obtaining it, is not only groundless and absurd, but often hurtful to that posterity, since it is apt to make them proud, disdaining to be employed in useful arts, and thence falling into poverty, and all the meannesses, servility, and wretchedness attending it; which is the present case of much of what is called the *noblesse* in Europe. Or if, to keep up the dignity of the family, estates were entailed entire on the eldest male heir, another pest to industry and improvement of the country is introduced, which will be followed by all the odious mixture of pride and beggary and idleness, that have half depopulated and *decultivated* Spain; occasioning continual extinction of families by the discouragements of marriage, and neglect in the improvement of estates. I wish, therefore, that the Cincinnati, if they must go on with their project, would direct the badges of their order to be worn by their fathers and mothers, instead of handing them down to their children. It would be a good precedent, and might have good effects. It would also be a kind of obedience to the

fourth commandment, in which God enjoins us to *honor* our father and mother, but has nowhere directed us to honor our children. And certainly no mode of honoring those immediate authors of our being can be more effectual, than that of doing praiseworthy actions, which reflect honor on those who gave us our education; or more becoming, than that of manifesting, by some public expression or token, that it is to their instruction and example we ascribe the merit of those actions. . . .

The gentleman who made the voyage to France to provide the ribbons and medals, has executed his commission. To me they seem tolerably done; but all such things are criticised. Some find fault with the Latin, as wanting classical elegance, and correctness; and, since our nine universities were not able to furnish better Latin, it was a pity, they say, that the mottoes had not been in English. Others object to the title, as not properly assumable by any but General Washington, and a few others, who served without pay. Others object to the *bald eagle*, as looking too much like a *dindon* or turkey. For my own part, I wish the bald eagle had not been chosen as the representative of our country; he is a bird of bad



moral character; he does not get his living honestly; you may have seen him perched on some dead tree, where, too lazy to fish for himself, he watches the labor of the fishing-hawk, and when that diligent bird has at length taken a fish, and is bearing it to his nest for the support of his mate and young ones, the bald eagle pursues him, and takes it from him. With all this injustice he is never in good case; but, like those among men who live by sharpening and robbing, he is generally poor, and often very lousy. Besides, he is a rank coward; the little *kingbird*, not bigger than a sparrow, attacks him boldly, and drives him out of the district. He is, therefore, by no means, a proper emblem for the brave and honest Cincinnati of America, who have driven all the *kingbirds* from our country; though exactly fit for that order of knights, which the French call, *chevaliers d'industrie*. I am, on this account, not displeased that the figure is not known as a bald eagle, but looks more like a turkey. For in truth, the turkey is in comparison a much more respectable bird, and withal, a true original native of America. Eagles have been found in all countries, but the turkey was peculiar to ours. He is, be-

sides (though a little vain and silly, it is true, but not the worst emblem for that), a bird of courage, and would not hesitate to attack a grenadier of the British guards, who should presume to invade his farmyard with a *red* coat on."

It happened once at a dinner-party, at which Franklin was present, that upon the opening of a bottle of wine which had long been sealed up, a dead fly was poured out. The host laid it in the sunshine, where it soon became dry and warm, and, after a while, revived so much as to be able to move its wings. The doctor observed on seeing it, that he should be glad to awake after sleeping in his grave for a hundred years or more, that he might witness the progress which science had made since his departure from the earth. And what wonders he would behold, could his desire have been granted. "Had he lived a little more than another fifty years, he would have seen the mode of popular education initiated by the Spectator, expanded into the elaborate Review, the brilliant Magazine, the Household Words, and Scientific Journals of the present day; the rude hand-press, upon which he arranged the miniature 'copy' of

the *New England Courant*, transformed into electrotyped cylinders worked by steam, and throwing off thirty thousand printed sheets an hour; the thin almanac, with its proverbs and calendar grown to a plethoric volume, rich in astronomical lore and the statistics of a continent; the vessel dependent on the caprice of the winds and an imperfect science of navigation, self-impelled with a pre-calculated rate of speed, and by the most authentic charts; and the subtle fluid, that his prescience caught up and directed safely by a metal rod, sent along leagues of wire, the silent and instant messenger of the world! With what keen interest would he have followed Davy with his safety-lamp, into the treacherous mine; accompanied Fulton in his first steam-voyage up the Hudson; watched Daguerre as he made his sun-pictures; seen the vineyards along the Ohio attest his prophetic advocacy of the Rhenish grape-culture; heard Miller discourse of the 'Old Red Sandstone;' Morse explain the telegraph, or Maury the tidal laws! Chemistry, almost born since his day, would open a new and wonderful realm to his consciousness; the 'Cosmos' of Humboldt would draw his entranced gaze down every vista of natural

science, as if to reveal at a glance a programme of all the great and beautiful secrets of the universe; and the reckless enterprise and mad extravagance of his prosperous country, would elicit more emphatic warnings than Poor Richard breathed of old."\*

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\* Tuckerman's "Biographical Essays," p. 478. "It is said that Dr. Franklin first introduced broom-corn into our country; he chanced to see a corn whisk in the possession of a lady, and while examining it as a novelty, he spied a grain of it still attached to the stalk. This he took and planted."—Dr. Wm. Darlington, the eminent botanist of Westchester, Pa., in his "Agricultural Botany."

## CHAPTER NINETEENTH.

Protest against duelling—Franklin's services for his country and mankind—His respect for true religion—False charges refuted—Letter to Dr. Johnson—Recognition of God's providence—Consolations in affliction—"These are Thy doings, O Lord!"—The swarm of bees—A test subscription—Not blinking a troublesome question—Dr. Priestley's influence discovered—President Stiles' catechism—Doubts on a most important point—More light promised.

IN the "Life of General Washington," in this series, his opinion in regard to duelling is given, as a protest against those who now countenance this bloodthirsty and barbarous practice. Dr. Franklin's language is scarcely less strong and decided.

"It is astonishing," he says, "that the murderous practice of duelling should continue so long in vogue. Formerly, when duels were used to determine lawsuits, from an opinion that Providence would in every instance favor truth and right with victory, they were excusable. At present, they decide nothing. How can such miserable sinners as we are entertain so much pride, as to conceit that every offence



CHRIST CHURCH, PHILADELPHIA.

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against our imagined honor, merits death! These petty princes, in their own opinion, would call that sovereign a tyrant, who should put one of them to death for a little uncivil language, though pointed at his sacred person; yet every one of them makes himself judge in his own cause, condemns the offender without a jury, and undertakes himself to be the executioner."\*

Franklin was not only the great moralist of ante-revolutionary society, but he was the reclaimer of that society to the spirit of religious forbearance which might have been expected to grow out of the circumstances of its planting here, but which, rather, was smothered in the birth. He was the projector of the union of these States. He and Washington worked out the problem of independence and confederation. Without morals, religion, Christianity,—the grand climax of the social bond,—this Republic could not have risen. Notwithstanding the many evidences which Dr. Franklin gave through life of his respect for true religion, efforts have often been made to drag him down into the mire of infidelity, and to

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\* Dr. Franklin's writings, vol. x., p. 107.



throw his influence on the side of evil. In Parton's "Life of Aaron Burr," for example, he alludes euphemistically to the latter, "coming in contact with the skepticism that was then the rage in Europe, and which had captivated the Jeffersons and Franklins of America" [p. 64]. Now, this charge, so far as Franklin is concerned, is simply false. Of all the leaders among men, no two can be found, out of the ranks of the clergy, whose lives and writings show such constant dependence on Divine Providence, such warmth of gratitude for God's mercies and blessings, and such unaffected inculcation of religious principle as the basis of society, as the lives and writings of Franklin and Washington. These men were "giants," and they did *not* fall into the skepticism of their times, and this is significant both of the greatness of their characters, and of the depth of their religious principles.

The writer had marked many passages in Franklin's works, which prove the truth of this position, but he is sorry to be obliged to omit the larger portion of them for want of space. In writing to Dr. Johnson, the first president of Columbia College, in 1750, he remarks: "I think that talents for the educa-

- tion of youth are the gift of God ; and that he on whom they are bestowed, whenever a way is opened for the use of them, is as strongly called as if he heard a voice from Heaven ; nothing more surely pointing out duty in public service, than ability and opportunity of performing it.”
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Two years later, he thus writes to his sister, Mrs. Jane Mecom, who was mourning over the loss of a child : “ I am pleased to find that, in your troubles, you do not overlook the mercies of God, and that you consider as such the children that are still spared to you. This is a right temper of mind, and must be acceptable to that beneficent Being, who is in various ways continually showering down His blessings upon many that receive them as things of course, and feel no grateful sentiments arising in their hearts on the enjoyment of them.”

In 1755, he remarks in another letter : “ Thanks to God, I never was in better health. I still relish all the pleasures of life that a temperate man can in reason desire, and through favor I have them all in my power. This happy condition shall continue as long as God pleases, who knows what is best for His

creatures, and I hope will enable me to bear with patience and dutiful submission any change He may think fit to make, that is less agreeable."

The next year, on the death of his brother John, he thus condoles with a member of the afflicted family. "We have lost a most dear and valuable relation. But it is the will of God and nature, that those mortal bodies be laid aside, when the soul is to enter into real life. This is rather an embryo state, a preparation for living. A man is not completely born until he is dead. Why, then, should we grieve that a new child is born among the immortals, a new member added to their happy society?"

The influences of the fashionable skepticism, which would have proved so dangerous to a person of weaker judgment, made no change in Dr. Franklin's religious opinions, and he was ready to ascribe the glory to God for the happy settlement of the affairs of his beloved country.

In a letter to Josiah Quincy, dated Passy, Sept. 11th, 1783, he observes: "Considering all our mistakes and mismanagements, it is wonderful we have finished our affairs so well,

and so soon. Indeed, I am wrong in using that expression, 'we have finished our affairs so well.' Our blunders have been many, and they serve to manifest the hand of Providence more clearly in our favor; so that we may much more properly say, 'These are *Thy* doings, O Lord, and they are marvellous in our eyes.'"

In early life, Franklin had composed a little book of prayers, which he was in the habit of using in his devotions, and we mentioned in a former chapter, the good example he set in still attending public worship, at a very advanced age. He was, for a while, one of the vestry of Christ Church, Philadelphia,\* and at all times ready to contribute his full share towards the erection of churches, and for other

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\* An anecdote is related, which is in perfect keeping with Dr. Franklin's character for sagacity. The project of the erection of another church edifice in the city of Philadelphia, was under discussion, and there were some members of the vestry who conscientiously opposed it, in the fear that the division of the congregation would too much weaken the old church. But Franklin defended the new enterprise, and to show that no permanent diminution, but rather a solid increase was to be expected from the measure, quoted the habit of the bees, of swarming, "by which," he said, "the comfort and prosperity of the old hive was increased, and a new and flourishing colony established, to keep the parent stock in countenance."

religious objects. Among his dearest friends he numbered Whitefield and Bishop Shipley. Strange society, indeed, for an irreligious man, as some would persuade us that he was.

On the 21st of June, 1776, a test subscription was prepared, to be signed by members of the Pennsylvania Convention who had assembled to frame a constitution, and which read as follows :

“I, —, do profess faith in God the Father, and in Jesus Christ His Eternal Son, the true God, and in the Holy Spirit, one God, blessed for evermore; and do acknowledge the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament to be given by Divine Inspiration.”

This was not only signed by Franklin, but drawn up for the signature of members at a preliminary conference, of which he was one, and, indeed, the first on the list. It encountered much opposition, outside, and some obloquy: yet it does not appear that he or others faltered, but rather the contrary.

As it is by no means our object to make out a case, but to record nothing but the truth, we must say in all frankness, that it is much to be regretted that the great philosopher did

not bestow more attention on the evidences of Christianity, as he would thus have been saved from some perplexities and doubts. We are not disposed to blink the question at all, that such perplexities and doubts did sometimes disturb his mind. His intimacy with Dr. Priestley,\* the eminent champion of Unitarianism, will account for this, in no small degree.

In 1790, when Dr. Franklin was eighty-four years of age, President Stiles,† of Yale Col-

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\* Joseph Priestley was born near Leeds, in England, in 1733, his parents being rigid Calvinists. He was a young man of promise, whose judgment revolted at the system of religion which had been taught him, and he adopted Unitarian views, soon afterwards coming out as a preacher. He became acquainted with Franklin, in London, about 1766, and their sympathy in scientific studies made them warm friends. It will be needless to give Dr. Priestley's history in detail. Of his abilities there can be no question. Franklin would, however, have been saved from some perplexing doubts, had he heard less of the unsound doctrine of the Unitarian divine.

† Soon after Franklin had made his first experiments in electricity, he sent an electrical apparatus to Yale College, where Mr. Stiles was then a tutor. The young man entered at once with great zeal upon the new field of philosophical investigation, and performed the earliest electrical experiments ever made in New England. In 1778, Dr. Stiles was chosen president of the college. Many years before this (1755), he had pronounced a Latin oration in honor of Dr. Franklin, on occasion of his visiting New Haven, and their friendship was

lege, wrote to him, making particular inquiries about his religious opinions. It is true, they had long been acquainted with each other, but there never could have been much congeniality between the good-humored philosopher and the stern, unbending Puritan.

Dr. Franklin returned a polite answer to the president's catechism, but there appears to be a little dry sarcasm under the garb of very simple language when he remarks, that it was the first time in his life that he had ever been questioned about his religious opinions before. He then goes on to declare his belief in the unity and moral government of God, and the paramount "system of morals and religion" of "Jesus of Nazareth," as the "best the world ever saw, or is likely to see," and concludes by saying that he had entertained some doubts of the Saviour's Divinity. "This is a question," remarks the doctor, "I do not dogmatize upon, having never studied it, and think it needless to busy myself with it now, when I expect soon an opportunity of knowing the truth with less trouble."

This was only five weeks before the sum-

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uninterrupted only by death. (See "Sprague's Annals," vol. I, p. 471.)

mons came, for which he had so long and so anxiously waited. In the account which will in due time be given of his last hours, we think it will be seen that Dr. Franklin looked to the SAVIOUR of sinners for help, and to Him only.



## CHAPTER TWENTIETH.

No offices of profit—Dr. Franklin carries out his principles—Retirement from public life—A scene in the domestic circle—Painful sickness—Farewell letter to President Washington—Patience in suffering—Repeats Dr. Watts' hymns—Preparing to depart—Picture of the crucifixion—Looking unto Jesus—Falls asleep—Account of the funeral—Plain tombstone—Act of kindness for poor mechanics—Honors paid to Franklin after death—Items from the parish register of Christ Church, Philadelphia—Conclusion.

**D**R. FRANKLIN had long entertained the opinion that in a democratic form of government there ought to be no offices of profit. It gave him such pleasure to serve his country, that he could hardly imagine a true-born son of the republic less unselfish than himself. As a proof of his zeal in the cause of independence, it should be mentioned that before leaving home in 1776, on his uncertain embassy to France, such confidence did he feel as to the result of the contest with England, that he placed almost four thousand pounds, which was all the money he could command, as a loan at the disposal of Congress. The salary which he received as president of Pennsyl-



DR. FRANKLIN'S GRAVE IN CHRIST CHURCH-YARD, PHILADELPHIA.  
Front Chap. 20.



vania, he appropriated to some object of general utility; and, taking the fifty years of his public life together, the amount of compensation was not enough to cover his actual expenses.

His third and last year's service as president of Pennsylvania expired in October, 1788, after which he held no office, although he was often consulted about public measures.

We have a pleasant picture of him as he appeared in domestic life, by a distinguished scholar, who spent an evening at his house in 1787:

"Dr. Franklin lives in Market-street. His house stands up a court, at some distance from the street. We found him in his garden, sitting upon a grass-plot, under a very large mulberry-tree, with several other gentlemen, and two or three ladies. When Mr. Gerry introduced me, he rose from his chair, took me by the hand, expressed his joy at seeing me, welcomed me to the city, and begged me to seat myself close to him. His voice was low, but his countenance open, frank, and pleasing. I delivered to him my letters. After he had read them, he took me again by the hand, and, with the usual compliments, introduced me to

the other gentlemen, who are most of them members of the convention.

“Here we entered into a free conversation, and spent our time most agreeably, until it was quite dark. The tea-table was spread under the tree, and Mrs. Bache, who is the only daughter of the doctor, and lives with him, served it out to the company. She had three of her children about her. They seemed to be excessively fond of their grandpapa. The doctor showed me a curiosity he had just received, and with which he was much pleased. It was a snake with two heads, preserved in a large vial. It was taken near the confluence of the Schuylkill with the Delaware, about four miles from this city. It was about ten inches long, well proportioned, the heads perfect, and united to the body about one-fourth of an inch below the extremities of the jaws. The snake was of a dark brown, approaching to black, and the back beautifully speckled with white. The belly was rather checkered with a reddish color and white. The doctor supposed it to be full grown, which I think is probable; and he thinks it must be a *sui generis* of that class of animals. He grounds his opinion of its not being an extraordinary

production, but a distinct genus, on the perfect form of the snake, the probability of its being of some age, and there having been found a snake entirely similar—of which the doctor has a drawing, which he showed us—near Lake Champlain, in the time of the late war. He mentioned the situation of this snake, if it was travelling among bushes, and one head should choose to go on one side of the stem of a bush, and the other head should prefer the other side, and neither of the heads would consent to come back, or give way to the other. He was then going to mention a humorous matter that had that day occurred in the convention, in consequence of his comparing the snake to America; for he seemed to forget that every thing in the convention was to be kept a profound secret. But the secrecy of convention matters was suggested to him, which stopped him, and deprived me of the story he was going to tell. After it was dark, we went into the house, and he invited me into his library, which is likewise his study. It is a very large chamber, and high studded. The walls are covered with bookshelves, filled with books; besides, there are four large alcoves, extending two-thirds the

length of the chamber, filled in the same manner. I presume this is the largest and by far the best private library in America. He showed us a glass machine for exhibiting the circulation of the blood in the arteries and veins of the human body. The circulation is exhibited by the passing of a red fluid from a reservoir into numerous capillary tubes of glass, ramified in every direction, and then returning in similar tubes to the reservoir, which was done with great velocity, without any power to act visibly upon the fluid, and had the appearance of perpetual motion.

“Another great curiosity was a rolling-press for taking the copies of letters or any other writing. A sheet of paper is completely copied in less than two minutes—the copy as fair as the original, and without defacing it in the smallest degree. It is an invention of his own, extremely useful in many situations of life. He also showed us his long, artificial *arm* and *hand* for taking down and putting up books on high shelves which are out of reach; and his great arm-chair, with rockers, and a large fan placed over it, with which he fans himself, keeps off the flies, &c., while he sits reading, with only a small motion of the

foot; and many other curiosities and inventions, all his own, but of less note. Over his mantel he has a prodigious number of medals, busts, and casts in wax or plaster of Paris, which are the effigies of the most noted characters in Europe.

“But what the doctor wished principally to show me was a huge volume on botany, which indeed afforded me the greatest pleasure of any thing in his library. It was a single volume, but so large that it was with great difficulty that he was able to raise it from a low shelf and lift it on the table. But with that senile ambition which is common to old people, he insisted on doing it himself, and would permit no person to assist him, merely to show us how much strength he had remaining. It contained the whole of Linnæus’s “*Systema Vegetabilium*,” with large cuts of every plant, colored from nature. It was a feast to me, and the doctor seemed to enjoy it as well as myself. We spent a couple of hours in examining this volume, while the other gentlemen amused themselves with other matters. The doctor is not a botanist, but lamented he did not in early life attend to this science. He delights in Natural History, and



expressed an earnest wish that I should pursue the plan that I had begun, and hoped this science, so much neglected in America, would be pursued with as much ardor here as it is now in every part of Europe. I wanted for three months at least to have devoted myself entirely to this one volume; but fearing lest I should be tedious to him, I shut up the volume, though he urged me to examine it longer. He seemed extremely fond, through the course of the visit, of dwelling on philosophical subjects, and particularly that of Natural History, while the other gentlemen were swallowed up with politics. This was a favorable circumstance for me; for almost the whole of his conversation was addressed to me, and I was highly delighted with the extensive knowledge he appeared to have of every subject, the brightness of his memory, and clearness and vivacity of all his mental faculties, notwithstanding his age. His manners are perfectly easy, and every thing about him seems to diffuse an unrestrained freedom and happiness. He has an incessant vein of humor, accompanied with an uncommon vivacity, which seems as natural and involuntary as his breathing. He urged me to call on him again, but

my short stay would not admit. We took our leave at ten, and I retired to my lodgings."

Dr. Franklin had now been an invalid for several years, and often suffered acute bodily pain. He refers to his health in a letter to President Washington,\* written on the 16th of September, 1789:

"My malady renders my sitting up to write rather painful to me; but I cannot let my son-in-law, Mr. Bache, depart for New York without congratulating you by him on the recovery of your health, so precious to us all, and on the growing strength of our new government under your administration.

"For my own personal ease, I should have died two years ago; but, though those years have been spent in excruciating pain, I am pleased that I have lived them, since they have brought me to see our present situation. I am now finishing my eighty-fourth year, and probably with it my career in this life; but, in whatever state of existence I am placed

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\* "My fine crab-tree walking-stick, with a gold head curiously wrought in the form of the cap of liberty, I give to my friend, and the friend of mankind, GENERAL WASHINGTON. If it were a sceptre, he has merited it, and would become it."—*Dr. Franklin's Will.*

hereafter, if I retain any memory of what has passed here, I shall with it retain the esteem, respect, and affection, with which I have long been, my dear friend, yours most sincerely."

Although Dr. Franklin continued to suffer extremely from disease, there was no decided change in his condition until early in April, 1790, when he was attacked with a fever, and a pain in the breast. Sick and feeble as he was, the intervals of quiet between the violent paroxysms of pain were spent in reading, and in cheerful conversation with his friends.

Occasionally, when a groan escaped him, he would meekly observe that he was afraid he did not bear his sufferings as he ought, frequently expressing his grateful sense of obligation to God for His unnumbered mercies.

A friend came in one day, and found him in great agony; when this had abated somewhat, he desired her to read to him. The first book she saw was Johnson's "Lives of the Poets," and turning to the sketch of Dr. Watts, who was a favorite with the sick man, she read it aloud, supposing that it would lull him to sleep. Instead of this, it roused him to a dis-

play of the powers of memory and reason, and he repeated several of Watts' hymns with great feeling.\*

Dr. Franklin continued to speak of his approaching departure, not only with composure, but with cheerfulness, and when his daughter expressed the wish that he might yet recover, and live many years longer, he calmly replied, "I hope not."

The following interesting particulars were obtained from Dr. Helmuth of the German Church, Philadelphia. Hearing that this learned and pious divine possessed a valuable anecdote of Dr. Franklin, I immediately waited on him. "Yes, sir," said he, "I have indeed a valuable anecdote of Dr. Franklin, which I would tell you with great pleasure; but as I do not speak English very well, I wish you would call on David Ritter, at the sign of the

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\* It is worth recording here, that in 1782, a friend sent Dr. Franklin a copy of Cowper's Poems, a book, in some respects, quite in harmony with the "Lyric Poems" of Watts. The present was highly appreciated, and he replied, "The relish for reading poetry had long since left me; but there is something so new in the manner, so easy, and yet so correct in the language, so clear in the expression, yet concise, and so just in the sentiments, that I have read the whole with great pleasure, and some of the pieces more than once."—*Sparks*, vol. ix., p. 221.

‘Golden Lamb,’ in Front-street, he will tell it to you better.” I hastened to Mr. Ritter, and told him my errand. He seemed mightily pleased at it, and said, “Yes, I will tell you all I know of it. You must understand then, sir, first of all, that I always had a prodigious opinion of Dr. Franklin, as the *usefulest* man we ever had among us, by a long way; and so, hearing that he was sick, I thought I would go and see him. As I rapped at the door, who should come and open it but old Sarah Humphries. I was right glad to see her, for I had known her for a long time. She was of the people called Friends; and a good sort of a body she was too. The great people set a heap of store by her, for she was famous throughout the town for nursing and tending on the sick. Indeed, many of them, I believe, thought they could not sicken and die right, if they had not old Sarah Humphries with them. Soon as she saw me, she said, ‘Well, David, how dost?’

“ ‘Oh, much after the old sort, Sarah,’ said I; ‘but that’s neither here nor there; I am come to see Dr. Franklin.’

“ ‘Well, then,’ said she, ‘thou art too late, for he is *just dead*!’

“ ‘A-lack-a-day,’ said I, ‘then a great man is gone.’

“ ‘Yes, indeed,’ said she, ‘and a *good* one too ; for it seemed as though he never thought the day went away if he had not done somebody a service. However, David,’ said she, ‘he is not the worse off for all that now, where he has gone to ; but come, as thee came to see Benjamin Franklin, thee shall see him yet.’ And so she took me into his room. As we entered she pointed to him, where he lay on his bed, and said, ‘*There*, did thee ever see any thing look so natural?’

“And he did look natural, indeed. His eyes were closed. But that you saw he did not breathe, you would have thought he was in a sweet sleep, he looked so calm and happy. Observing that his face was fixed right towards the chimney, I cast my eyes that way, and behold ! just above the mantel-piece was a noble picture. Oh, it was a *noble picture*, sure enough ! it was the picture of our Saviour on the cross.

“I could not help calling out, ‘Bless us all, Sarah !’ said I ; ‘what’s all this?’

“ ‘What dost mean, David ?’ said she, quite crusty.

“ ‘Why, how came this picture here, Sarah?’ said I; ‘you know that many people think<sup>a</sup> he was not after this sort.’

“ ‘Yes,’ said she, ‘I know that too. But thee knows that many who make a great fuss about religion have very little, while some who say but little about it have a good deal.’

“ ‘That’s sometimes the case, I fear, Sarah,’ said I.

“ ‘Well, and<sup>a</sup> that was the case,’ said she, ‘with Benjamin Franklin. But, be that as it may, David, since thee asks me about this great picture, I’ll tell thee how it came here. Many weeks ago, as he lay, he beckoned me to him, and told me of this picture up-stairs, and begged I would bring it to him. I brought it to him. His face brightened up as he looked at it, and he said, “Ay, Sarah, there’s a picture worth looking at! that’s the picture of Him who came into the world to teach men to love one another!” Then after looking at it wistfully for some time, he said, “Sarah, set this picture up over the mantel-piece, right before me as I lie, for I like to look at it;” and when I fixed it up, he looked at it, and looked at it very much; and indeed, as thou seest, he died with his eyes fixed on it!’ ”

On Saturday, the 17th of April, 1790, about eleven o'clock at night, Dr. Franklin quietly breathed his last, closing a long and useful life of eighty-four years and three months. The funeral took place on the afternoon of the following Wednesday ; an account of which we copy from the *Federal Gazette*, published the next day :

"The following was the order of procession, yesterday, at the funeral of our late learned and illustrious citizen, Dr. Franklin.

"All the clergy of the city, including the ministers of the Hebrew congregations, before the corpse.

"The corpse, carried by citizens ; the pall supported by the president of the State, the chief-justice, president of the bank, Samuel Powell, William Bingham, and David Rittenhouse, Esqrs.

"Mourners, consisting of the family of the deceased, with a number of particular friends.

"The secretary and members of the Supreme Executive Council.

"The speaker and members of the General Assembly.

"Judges of the Supreme Court and other officers of government.



“The gentlemen of the bar.

“The mayor and corporation of the city of Philadelphia.

“The printers of the city, with their journeymen and apprentices.

“The Philosophical Society.

“The College of Physicians.

“The Cincinnati.

“The College of Philadelphia.

“And sundry other societies, together with a numerous and respectable body of citizens.

“The concourse of spectators was greater than ever was known on a like occasion. It is computed that not less than 20,000 persons attended and witnessed the funeral. The order and silence which prevailed, during the procession, deeply evinced the heartfelt sense entertained by all classes of citizens, of the unparalleled virtues, talents, and services of the deceased.”

On the day of the funeral the flags of the shipping in port were at half-mast, and the public demonstrations of respect for the memory of the deceased were general. A long panegyric on the virtues of Franklin was published in the *Federal Gazette* on the day of the funeral. The conclusion of it was as follows :

"Then Pennsylvania! every tribute pay;  
Erect the sculptured marble o'er his clay:  
Thus youth at equal praise may boldly aim,  
And catch at Franklin's tomb Worth's hallow'd flame."

Franklin had directed in his will, that a plain stone, six feet by four, should be placed over his and his wife's grave, with the following inscription, which is yet to be seen marking the spot.

BENJAMIN  
AND  
DEBORAH } FRANKLIN.  
1790.

Instead of spending his money foolishly in a costly monument, he left a handsome sum the interest of which was to be loaned to poor young men just starting in business as mechanics, in Boston and Philadelphia. This evidence of his kindness yet remains.

As Dr. Franklin's name has been frequently mentioned in this memoir in connection with Christ Church, Philadelphia, the reader will be glad to peruse these items, collected from the Parish Register, by the venerable Dr. Dorr, the present rector.

"It would appear from the records that he was a pew-holder there, from about the time of his marriage, in 1730, to the period of his decease, in 1790; that is, for sixty years.

The records show the baptism of two of his children, Francis Folger, Sept. 16th, 1733, and Sarah, Oct. 27th, 1743; also the marriage of his daughter Sarah to Richard Bache, Oct. 29th, 1767.

“His son Francis was buried in Christ Church ground, Nov., 1736; his wife, Dec. 22d, 1774; himself, April 21st, 1790; his daughter, Mrs. Bache, Oct. 7th, 1808; and her husband, Richard Bache, July 30th, 1811. These all lie by the side of each other.

“In 1739, a subscription paper was drawn up, for raising funds to finish the new church, and Dr. Franklin’s name appears on the subscription list. He also subscribed, in 1751, towards building a steeple and purchasing a chime of bells.

“In 1752, and again in 1753, he was appointed by vestry one of thirteen managers of a lottery, to raise twelve hundred pounds, for finishing the steeple and paying for the bells.

“The pew in Christ Church, which he held at the time of his death, he had rented for thirty years, at least, and probably much longer. It was afterwards held by his children, Mr. and Mrs. Bache. It is now pew No. 25, on the north side of the middle aisle.”

Congress was in session in New York at the time of Franklin's death. On receipt of the intelligence, a resolution was passed that the members should wear the customary badge of mourning one month, as a mark of the veneration due to the memory of a citizen "whose native genius was not more an ornament to human nature than his various exertions of it have been to science, to freedom, and to his country."

When the decease of the philosopher and statesman was known in France, it was announced in the National Assembly by M. Mirabeau, the elder, who proposed, after a burst of eulogy full of the spirit of the age and the enthusiasm of a Frenchman, that the Assembly should wear mourning for three days, to "participate in the homage rendered in the face of the universe to the rights of man, and to the philosopher who had so eminently propagated the conquest of them throughout the world." The proposition was seconded by Rochefoucauld and Lafayette, and adopted by acclamation. It was also resolved that the address of Mirabeau should be printed, and that a letter of condolence should be addressed to the Congress of the United States. This duty

was performed by the President of the Assembly: and upon the receipt of the letter, Congress, by resolution, desired President Washington to "communicate to the National Assembly of France the peculiar sensibility of Congress to the tribute paid to the memory of Benjamin Franklin by the enlightened and free representatives of a great nation;" and Washington, in his answer, happily acknowledged this peculiar proof of national courtesy.

We need pronounce no eulogium upon Dr. Franklin. May the young men of this, and of succeeding generations, strive to emulate his virtues.

THE END.

LIFE OF WASHINGTON.

## LIFE OF GENERAL WASHINGTON.

BY THE REV. J. N. NORTON.

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### Notices of the Press.

IN our boyish days, Weems' Life of Washington was the delight of all the juniors, and the warm, glowing pages of the eccentric parson have fired the patriotism of many a boy, and of many a girl, too. That work has nearly or quite disappeared. For a long time there has been no good Life of Washington in the market short enough for the use of those who have neither money to purchase nor time to read the great-works of Marshall, Sparks, and Irving. The Church Book Society of New York has conferred a benefit upon the whole people of the United States by employing the ever ready pen of our friend and neighbor, the Rev. J. N. Norton, of Frankfort, Ky., to supply this desideratum. The result is an exceedingly pleasant and instructive duodecimo volume of four hundred pages, which young and old of all classes can read with delight.—*Louisville Journal*.

All who are familiar with the other able and interesting works of the author, will be glad to see that he has employed his pen in preparing for the young a Life of the "father of his country." We take pleasure in commending it to their attention.—*Christian Witness*.

## LIFE OF WASHINGTON.

The author of this work—the Rev. Mr. Norton, of Frankfort, Ky., to whom we are indebted for many excellent volumes—while so shaping the narrative that Washington, as a man and a Christian, should not be overshadowed by the military hero, has also, within a brief space, recorded the principal events of his life, in a manner which can not fail to interest all classes of readers.—*Chicago Record.*

In this volume, better than in any other brief biography of Washington, are brought out the depth and strength of his religious convictions, and the steadiness with which his profession as a Churchman was maintained throughout life. Moreover, it shows in how great a degree the strong leading outlines of his character were influenced, if not moulded, by the system of the Church—imperfectly as it was then understood and carried out in many important particulars. These peculiarities give a very desirable and proper *tone* to Mr. Norton's work, though they do not usurp an undue share of attention. The narrative of the two great wars in which Washington was engaged, and of the other leading incidents in his career, is marked by all the author's well-known ease, clearness, and spirit.—*Church Journal.*

Of all the Lives of Washington which have been given to the public, none has pleased us more than the one now before us, as being specially adapted for the perusal of the young. The noble character of Washington, the pure motives which influenced his conduct from the commencement of his career till the day of his death, his indomitable perseverance under the most discouraging circumstances, and last, but far from least, his religious character, render him a fit model to be placed before the rising generation for their admiration and imitation.—*Churchman.*

## LIFE OF WASHINGTON.

The religious character, the Churchmanship of Washington is brought out in this volume. This is done in a just and admirable manner, and it is in this light that this great man should be viewed and contemplated by the youth of our country. It is a life. It makes us know Washington, from first to last, with sufficient detail and incident. The style is excellent, and the narrative sustains a full interest to the end. It is a remarkably good book, and should be the delight of all the youth in our Church. Mr. Norton's books are all good, but this one has a special interest, and evinces great industry and inquiry in the preparation of it. No Sunday School Library, no family should be without it.—*Banner of the Cross*.

This is a new volume of four hundred pages, and will no doubt interest the class of readers for whose benefit it has been written. Its main design, while recording the prominent events in the life of "the father of his country," is to show that Washington the man and the Christian should not be overshadowed by Washington the military hero.—*Western Episcopalian*.

We have here the latest of the series of biographies which Mr. Norton has been issuing for the past few years. Mr. Norton's very pleasant style is exhibited in this as in his previous works, and we think that in his attempt "to present a biography which shall at once be interesting and improving to readers of every class," he has succeeded remarkably well.—*Episcopal Recorder*.

For young persons, this is the best Life of Washington we have seen. The important and interesting incidents in the history of that great and good man are grouped together with skill, while the attention of the reader is always pointed to the moral lessons they convey. Washington's Churchmanship is indicated in language not to be mistaken.—*Gospel Messenger*.



## LIFE OF WASHINGTON.

The Church has been, and continues to be, much indebted to Mr. Norton for furnishing, and to the Church Book Society for publishing, much of deep interest to the evangelical and catholic cause. The records of the life of George Washington should be kept fresh, and in abundant supply, for successive generations, and extensive circulation. The work now before us, doing full justice to every other department of that great and good man's claims to veneration, confidence, and love, very properly gives prominence to those connected with his character as a *Christian*. We know of no biography of Washington that, within so limited a compass, gives a fuller and fairer view of the Father of his Country, and the great events and circumstances with which he was connected through life. It is well adapted to mingle into the studies of the young, and the reading of those who have not much time to spare.—*Churchman's Monthly Magazine*.

Mr. Norton has done, and done well, the noblest work to which, as yet, he has devoted his pen, in preparing for the youth of our country a "LIFE OF GENERAL WASHINGTON." It is full and satisfactory in just that respect in which Everett's graceful biography is defective. Throughout the narrative, which is very well written, Mr. Norton constantly bears testimony to that one element in Washington's character which emphatically made him what he was—his personal piety.

To Mr. Norton, and to the "Church Book Society," the whole Church is greatly indebted for this beautiful volume, which can not fail to do great good.—*Church Review*.

CRITICAL NOTICES.

RECENT PUBLICATIONS  
OF THE  
CHURCH BOOK SOCIETY.

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**Arthur and Marion's Sundays** are pretty little volumes, published by the Protestant Episcopal Sunday School Union, and written by the sisters Mrs. Bradley and Miss Neely, already known as the authors of "Bread upon the Waters" and "Ellie Randolph," with other kindred stories for children and young people. "Arthur," by Mrs. Bradley, is a collection of tales and ballads that approach Mary Howitt by their grace and naturalness, while a pure religion *as well as morality* distinguishes them from the elder favorite of the children. "Marion's Sundays," by Miss Neely, is a series of illustrations of the Ten Commandments, woven together in a single story. Its teachings are simple, clear, and withal attractive. Only mothers and teachers know the great worth of such aids to Sunday instruction.—*Godey's Lady's Book*.

**Ash Wednesday in the Nursery and Miss Laura's Wedding Day** are by the author of a nice Christmas book, "Philip and Arthur." This writer's style is extremely natural and sparkling. We know of no books that have more vividness of narrative, combined with the best teachings.—*Godey's Lady's Book*.

**The Toll-Gate** is a good little story, illustrating God's guidance in every event of our lives.—*Godey's Lady's Book*.

## CRITICAL NOTICES.

**Thoughts on the Services.** Designed as an Introduction to the Liturgy, and an Aid to its Devout Use. By A. Cleveland Coxe, Rector of Grace Church, Baltimore.

This is the third edition of a work which we have already favorably noticed. Encouraged by the reception given to the other editions, the author tells us that he has labored to make this edition more worthy of general adoption as an auxiliary to Christian education. It gives an interesting view of the Scriptures for the different Sundays, Festivals, and Fasts of the Christian year.—*Christian Witness*.

**The Sunday School Liturgy :** comprising an Office of Devotion by Bishop Hobart, a short Office of Devotion, and Hymns for Sunday Schools, selected from the Prayer Book and other sources.

With the first part of this work our Sunday Schools are generally familiar. The "Short Office" is adopted and approved in some places. The hymns differ mostly from those in the old Liturgy, many of them being adapted to various seasons of the ecclesiastical year.—*Gospel Messenger*.

**The Rectory of Valehead ;** or, The Edifice of a Holy Home. By the Rev. Robert Wilson Evans, B.D., Vicar of Heversham.

We thank the publisher for a reprint of this very attractive book. It presents a series of fragmentary but delightful pictures for pleasant and profitable contemplation.—*Christian Witness*.

**Lilias and her Cousins.** By the author of "Thomas Jackson" and "Walter Seyton."

This is a tale of Planter Life in the Old Dominion, well calculated to interest and instruct the young.—*Christian Witness*.

## CRITICAL NOTICES.

**Moravian Life;** or, An English Girl's Account of a Moravian Settlement in the Black Forest. Edited by the author of "Mary Powell."

An English girl, having been sent to a Moravian school, keeps a daily journal, which is in this book laid before the public. It is deeply interesting, not from any account of startling and thrilling incidents, but from the view which it enables one to obtain of the character of the Moravians, and the influence of their peculiar system upon the daily conduct. Their doctrines are said to be the same as ours. Their ministry is declared by an able divine, who has thoroughly examined the subject, to be in the regular line of the Apostolic succession. Their mode of worship is, for the most part, by a liturgy. Music, however, is a much more prominent feature with them than with us. Festivals are abundant. But what most charms the reader is the "simplicity and godly sincerity" which seems to pervade the whole of Moravian life. None can fail to admire and love the Moravians.—*Gospel Messenger*.

**The Children's Chant Book:** A Collection of Chants and Carols for Sunday Schools and Classes.—Part I. New York: Church Book Society.

This pamphlet of 32 pages contains music particularly for Sunday Schools, besides pieces proper for the Church Service, and various carols and songs which a child would delight to sing, especially during Christmas-tide. Its price is 3 cents only.—*Calendar*.

**The Church Primer.** Much larger than the "Union Primer," and a decided improvement upon it. Every page has from one to three beautiful wood-cuts. The picture alphabet is the best we have seen. The exercises in spelling and reading are progressive, and adapted to the capacities of infant minds.—*Gospel Messenger*.

CRITICAL NOTICES.

ADDRESSES  
TO  
CANDIDATES FOR ORDINATION,  
ON THE  
QUESTIONS IN THE ORDINATION SERVICE.  
BY THE BISHOP OF OXFORD.

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Every Priest, when not prevented by the urgent calls of parochial duty, ought to review the Ordination Service on every anniversary of his admission to holy orders. Here is a book well worthy his attention in connection with this subject. It has an Address based on each inquiry put to the candidate for Ordination—twelve Addresses in all. It is needless to say that they are highly suggestive, instructive, and encouraging, while abounding with solemn warnings, since they were delivered by such a man as the Bishop of Oxford, and delivered by him at successive Ordinations in his diocese. But we recommend this volume specially to students in Divinity, who have yet in prospect their reception of the commission of a Minister of Jesus Christ. They will find in this book much explanative of the meaning of the Ordinal, and much nobly calculated to stir their holiest affections, and to induce many serious reflections on the responsibilities of the sacred office. This would, indeed, constitute a good textbook in Pastoral Theology.—*Calendar*.

CRITICAL NOTICES.

BLIND LILIAS;  
OR,  
FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD.  
A TALE FOR THE YOUNG.  
BY A LADY.

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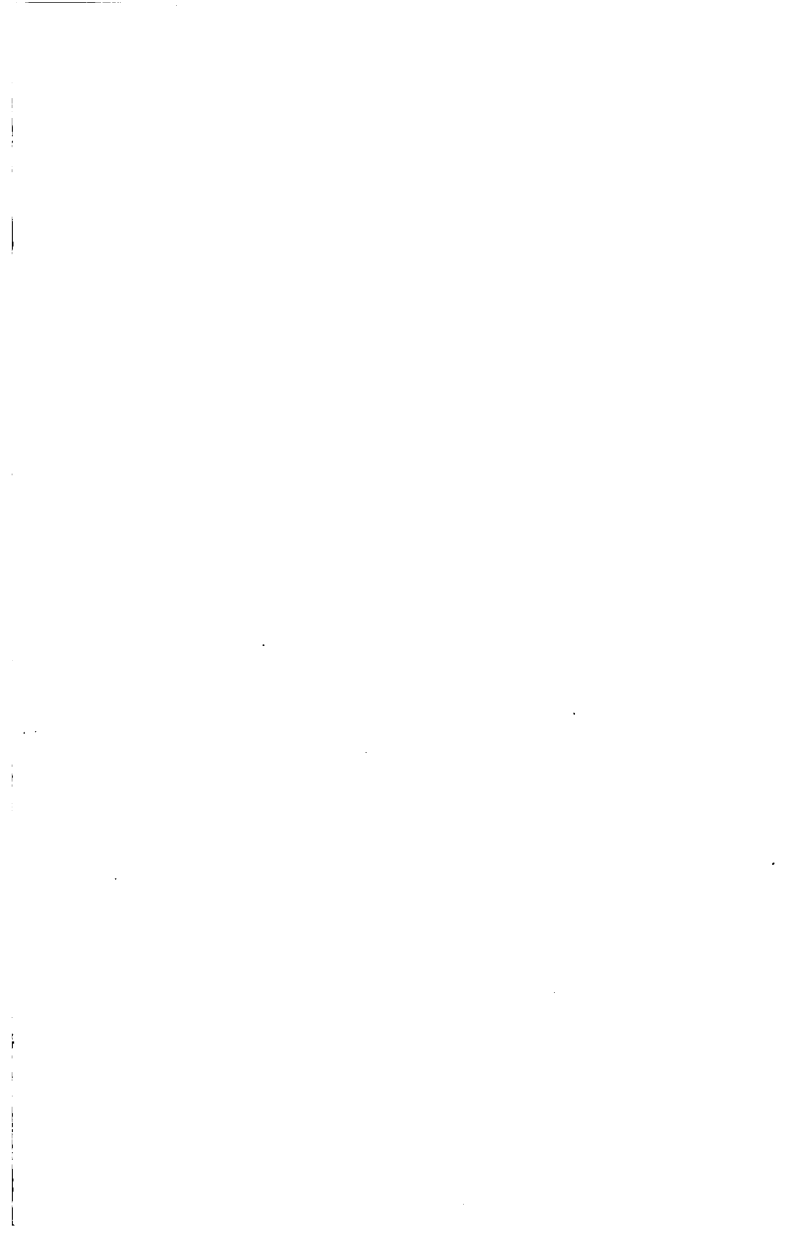
The triumphs of evangelical principle are graphically delineated in this simple and beautiful narrative. It tells of discipline in affliction, and of its gradual work in refining and rectifying corrupt nature. By degrees the perverse will is overcome, and the heart renewed in righteousness, till the kingdom of God is established in the soul. With an intimate knowledge of human nature, and a charming naturalness, the lady author has brought before us the life-like portraiture of a young and ingenuous girl, affectionate, impressible, and impulsive, but wayward and self-willed; full of warm and generous feelings, but perverse, proud, and passionate; with a mind of superior power and great intelligence, but headstrong and impatient of control—a character needing the severe chastening with which, in the providence of God, she is visited, to prepare her heart to receive the heavenly leaven. Finally, the child of nature becomes the child of grace, and walks in fellowship with God. This story abounds with interesting incidents. The volume is beautifully gotten up, and adorned with plates. *Calendar.*







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